Tejanos and Anglos in Nacogdoches

Coexistence on Texas' Eastern Frontier Under the Mexican and Texan Republics, 1821-1846

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Abstract

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In 1821, Texas and its citizens were part of Mexico. By 1846, Anglo-American immigrants had transformed the demographics, culture, and governance of Texas. Nowhere is this better exemplified than in Nacogdoches, Texas' oldest city. The influx of Anglo-Americans into Texas and the accompanying regime changes transformed the *Tejano* border town into an Anglo-dominated city, prompting struggles over civil rights, economic power, and political authority between Mexican- and Anglo-Texans both as individuals and as ethnic communities. Several violent insurrections pitted Nacogdochians against Anglo and Mexican outsiders as well as each other, culminating in the largest organized revolt against the Republic of Texas by its own citizens: the ultimately doomed Córdova Rebellion of 1838 and 1839. Yet this was the last gasp of *Tejano* resistance to the Anglicization of East Texas. By 1846, Anglo numerical superiority and American annexation forced Nacogdoches' Tejanos to accept an Anglo-dominated social hierarchy in order to preserve their rights, property, and community. Despite its contentious and complicated history, Nacogdoches – particularly its Tejano population – remains understudied by modern historians. To advance our understanding of race in Texas, we must examine Nacogdoches' Tejano and Anglo populations and their dynamic relationship to one another. Such an examination reveals two ethnic communities (and individuals claiming to act on their behalf) competing over Nacogdoches and cooperating in order to benefit and defend the town.

Acknowledgments

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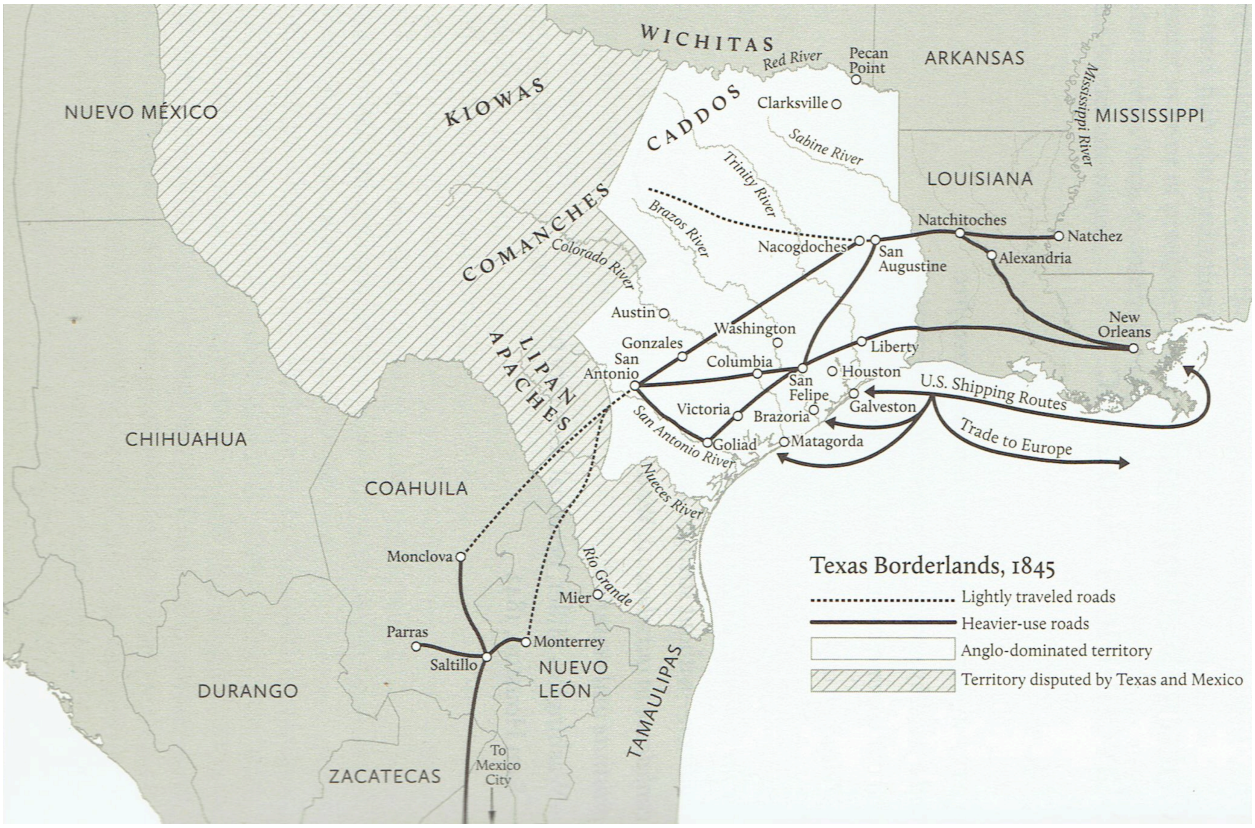

Texas Prior to United States Annexation.[1]

[1] Andrew J. Torget, *Seeds of Empire: Cotton, Slavery, and the Transformation of the Texas Borderlands, 1800-1850 (*Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 178.

Year	Population
1805 (Tejano Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches; "Foreigner" Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches, January, November[2]; Total Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches[3])	670; 51, 178; 810
1823 (Tejano Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches)	136
1825 (Tejano Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches)	500
1828 (Tejano Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches)	576
1829 (Tejano Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches)	513
1830 (Total Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches)[4]	779
1830 (Tejano Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches)	582
1831 (Tejano Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches)	596
1832 (Tejano Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches)	608
1833 (Tejano Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches)	647
1834 (Tejano Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches)	659
1835 (Tejano Population, *Municipio* of Nacogdoches)	537
1840 (Tejano Taxpayers, Nacogdoches County)[5]	28
1841 (Total Population, Nacogdoches County)[6]	4,789
1847 (Tejano Population: Town, County; Total "White" Population: Town, County; enslaved persons, free African Americans, County)[7]	6, 225; 299, 3,224; 1,229, 27
1850 (Tejano Population, Nacogdoches County)	171

Tejano Population of Nacogdoches, 1805-1850[8]

[2] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection at the Eugene C. Barker Center for Texas History at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas), Volume XVIII, 247.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] Gifford White, editor, *The 1830 Census of the Republic of Texas* (Austin, Texas: Elkin Press, 1983), 113-131.
[5] Gifford, White, editor, *The 1840 Census of the Republic of Texas* (Austin, Texas: The Pemberton Press, 19660, 120-136.
[6] "The Enumeration of the Inhabitants of the Town of Nacogdoches," in Nacogdoches, Texas. County clerk's office Tax book, 1841, Box 2R124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas, p. 9.
[7] Carolyn Reeves Ericson, transcriber, *1847 Census, Nacogdoches County,* The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.
[8] Andrés Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1994),* 20; Save where otherwise noted.

Chapter 1: Introduction

"The story of East Texas Tejanos remains and unaddressed void…"[9]

The history of Texas between 1821 and 1846 is a one of dramatic changes. No community exemplifies this so well as Nacogdoches, an old and historically significant city nestled in the woodlands of Eastern Texas. The town was divided for much of this period between its Mexican and Anglo-American ethnic communities. Relations between the two varied greatly in this twenty-five year epoch, often within relatively short amounts of time.

Perhaps the most drastic of these changes occurred between 1834 and 1838. In 1834, Colonel Juan Nepumoceno Almonte, a Mexican military official, visited Nacogdoches while studying Anglo-American immigration to Texas. United States citizens had been pouring into Texas in pursuit of cheap land for over a decade, and Mexico City was worried. The immigrants now outnumbered Mexican Texans by more than five to one, and had been involved in several brazen challenges to the authority of the Mexican federal government. Overall, Almonte found the newcomers to Texas troublesome and potentially dangerous – with one exception. He actually praised the Anglos of East Texas, and Nacogdoches in particular, as model immigrants: "the [Anglo-American] colonists of this department…are loyal to Mexico."[10] Nacogdoches, the department's capital and namesake, was the only community truly shared by Mexican Texans (called *Tejanos*) and Anglo immigrants in East Texas at that time.

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[9] Jesús F. de la Teja, "Forward," *Tejano Leadership in Mexican and Revolutionary Texas,* ed. Jesús F. de la Teja (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001), xvii.
[10] Juan N. Almonte, *Almonte's Texas: Juan N. Almonte's 1834 Inspection, Secret Report, & Role in the 1836 Campaign*, edited by Jack Johnson, translated by John Wheat (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2003), 103.

Two years later, the Anglos of Nacogdoches avidly supported a revolt against the Mexican government – first as rebellious Federalists, then as outright secessionists. Their Hispanic neighbors did not. In 1838, more than one hundred Tejano citizens of Nacogdoches, along with Native American, black, and even Anglo allies, engaged in an armed insurrection against the Republic of Texas. Historians have named the insurrection the Córdova Rebellion after its leader, Vicente Córdova, a former *alcalde* (mayor) and militia captain in the community. Though the rebels were a multiracial group, the insurrection was Tejano-led and largely based on Tejano concerns about Anglo dominance in Texas' government and society, and how their own Anglo neighbors abused this power. This was the case across Texas at the time, but the Tejanos of Nacogdoches – the smallest, poorest, and most isolated Tejano community in Texas – were the only Mexican Texians in in the Republic of Texas to produce such a challenge to the Anglo-dominated regime. The Córdova Rebellion itself was unparalleled in Texas during its brief stint as an independent state. The majority of the Tejanos in Nacogdoches, however, did not fight under Córdova. Some even opposed him. Nevertheless, the revolt marks a nadir for Tejano-Anglo relations in the Republic of Texas. This deterioration of the relationship between Nacogdoches' Mexican and Anglo-American communities between Almonte's visit and the Rebellion is part of a much larger story. The Córdova Rebellion was the culmination of a series of racially tinged incidents that had disturbed Nacogdoches over more than two decades of civil wars and variously successful rebellions.

Two factors led to the racial conflicts that occurred in Nacogdoches: a rapid succession of governments that laid claim to the town and an even more transformative shift in the town's demographics. Four governments possessed Nacogdoches in the span of only twenty-five years, 1821 to 1846. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Nacogdoches was a thriving

community on the eastern borderlands of colonial New Spain. When Mexico gained independence form Spain in 1821, the inhabitants of Nacogdoches became, legally, citizens of the young republic. At this time, Nacogdoches was in ruins and had been largely abandoned for the better part of a decade. In 1836, Nacogdochians became citizens of the Republic of Texas. After the United States annexed Texas in 1845 and the Republic officially relinquished its sovereignty in 1846, the United States claimed everything between the Sabine and the Río Grande, including Nacogdoches and the citizenship of its Anglo and Tejano inhabitants.

Each change in government corresponded with and encouraged changes in the racial composition of Nacogdoches, and shifted the balance of power between the town's Tejano and Anglo populations. The Anglo community in Nacogdoches prior to Mexican independence in 1821– the only Anglo population of note in Texas at the time – was tiny. Anglos had settled in Nacogdoches as early as the 1780s, attracted by fertile farmlands and lucrative opportunities in cross-border trade and smuggling. They were an ethnic minority, and bowed (mostly) to Spanish law and customs. Their numbers, however, increased dramatically after newly independent Mexico acknowledged Stephen F. Austin's settlement grant, originally issued by Spain, in 1821. This opened Texas to further *empresario*-led settlement that same year (*empresarios* managed land grants on which they settled potentially hundreds of families). Unlike prior Anglo immigrants, these newcomers showed little inclination to assimilate into Tejano society. For the next twenty-five years, the town's Tejano and ever-growing Anglo communities struggled to maintain an often tenuous coexistence. By 1845, Nacogdoches was no longer a small Tejano frontier settlement, but a predominantly Anglo city with a sizable though marginalized Mexican Texan population. The roles of the two communities had been effectively reversed.

Demographically and politically Nacogdoches mirrored the rest of Texas between 1821 and 1846. Perhaps for this reason, scholarly interest in the history of Tejano-Anglo relations, which emerged as a field of study in the 1970s, has mostly bypassed Nacogdoches. The only recent scholarship devoted to the region focuses solely on singular events, such as Córdova Rebellion or the expelling of the neighboring Cherokee population from the Republic by Texas President Mirabeau Lamar.[11] Earlier scholarship only examines Nacogdoches' history in a cursory or generally Anglocentric manner (that is, a manner which embraces a historical narrative of Anglo triumphalism and American Manifest Destiny). This neglect is surprising for several reasons. The history of Nacogdoches is complex and often violent, even by the standards of Texas during the 1820s, 1830s, and 1840s. This is due in part to Nacogdoches' previously noted multicultural and dynamic history, as well as its unique geographic position. It was the entryway into Texas for the vast majority of Anglo immigrants, and their first exposure to Hispanic Texas' culture and citizens. Nacogdoches also served as a lucrative hub of borderlands economic activity along the frontiers of Spain, Mexico, Texas, and the United States, encouraging many Anglos to remain in the area rather than continue toward Anglo settlements along the Colorado, Brazos, and Trinity Rivers. Furthermore, it was a community in the process of rebuilding itself after a decade of civil and secessionist warfare when Anglo newcomers began arriving in droves after 1821. The process of rebuilding would, with the addition of these new Anglos, ultimately transform the city. Nacogdoches' complicated history between Mexican independence and U.S. annexation necessitates study and incorporation into the still incomplete historical narratives of Texas and its ethnic communities under the rule of the Mexican and Texan Republics.

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[11] Gary Clayton Anderson, *The Conquest of Texas: Ethnic Cleansing in the Promised Land, 1820-187* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005); Paul D. Lack, "The Córdova Revolt," In *Tejano Journey, 1770-1850,* edited by Gerald E. Poyo (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996).

Beginning in the 1970s, historians produced a great deal of scholarly work concerning Tejanos, Anglos, and the interactions among them between Mexican independence and Texas' annexation by the U.S. However, most of this research focuses on the communities of Central and Coastal Texas' fertile river valleys. The historical literature addressing the ethnic communities of Nacogdoches, particularly the Tejano community, is meager. Generally, the history of Nacogdoches bears many similarities to those of other mixed Tejano-Anglo communities of the period, though there are distinct differences. Nacogdoches Tejanos – also called Adaeseños – were uniquely isolated from the rest of Hispanic Texas not only by geography but by their distinct history and cultural identity. Their interactions with the Anglos who poured over the Sabine starting in the 1820s were, likewise, unique. The degree of conflict and cooperation between Nacogdoches' Tejano and Anglo ethnic communities between 1821 and 1846 is unmatched elsewhere in Texas. Despite this, the history of this particular Tejano community – and of their Anglo neighbors – largely remains unaddressed.[12]

During the periods in which the Mexican and Texian Republics (1821-1836 and 1836-1846, respectively) controlled Texas, the relations and interactions between Tejanos and Anglos in Nacogdoches developed in a manner consistent with the rest of Texas: failed assimilation of Anglos into Tejano society, ensuing conflict, and the construction of an Anglo-dominated racial hierarchy. But Nacogdoches experienced this historical trend differently than any other Texan community. This was due to the distinct and multicultural history of Nacogdoches' small, isolated Tejano community. Though conflict between the two groups did occur, the Tejano and Anglo ethnic communities managed to cooperate and even forge a degree of shared communal identity unique in Texas, particularly in the late 1820s and early 1830s.

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[12] De la Teja, "Forward," *Tejano Leadership in Mexican and Revolutionary Texas,* xvii.

This cooperation, however, was imperfect, and concealed dangerous ethnic tensions. The two ethnic communities were engaged in a protracted struggle for dominance in Nacogdoches for two decades. Between 1821 and 1846, the Tejano and Anglo populations of Nacogdoches engaged in a series of often-violent conflicts against external forces, against each other, and even amongst themselves over the nature of the community's social, political, and ethnic hierarchies. These conflicts climaxed in 1839 with the Córdova Rebellion. The failure of this final attempt by the Tejano population to reverse the Anglicization of their hometown forced Nacogdoches' Tejanos to form an accommodating and subordinate relationship with members of the Anglo community in order to safeguard their remaining rights and power within the Nacogdoches community.

Historians typically frame these conflicts in racial terms, Tejanos (sometimes with African American and Native American allies) versus Anglos. This is a dangerous oversimplification. The primary causes of these conflicts were perceived threats, originating from an outside source, to the local community – whether that community identified themselves as Adaeseños, Nacogdochians, Texians, or something else – and its interests. While ethnicity and race were intrinsic to such senses of community, none of these conflicts drew clear-cut lines between Nacogdoches' Tejano and Anglo populations. Nonetheless, these struggles ultimately resulted in the marginalization of Nacogdoches' Tejanos and the ascendance of its Anglo population. Despite their conflicts, however, the Tejano and Anglo ethnic communities were more than capable of cooperating for the sake of Nacogdoches – provided both ethnic communities managed to benefit, even if not equitably.

1.1 Historiography – Cultural Conflict, the Frontier, and Nacogdoches in Texas' History

Battles over identity dominate the historiography of Texas, particularly the literature concerning the relationship between Tejanos and Anglos in Mexican Texas and the Republic of Texas. For the last 180 years professional and amateur historians have vehemently debated the subject. The historical literature on the topic reflects how social dynamics changed over the course of the twentieth century as this history was being written and debated. Scholarship on the academic history of Tejano-Anglo relationships can thus be categorized into three traditions, which succeeded each other chronologically: history by the colonizers, history by the colonized, and an effort to move away from the biases and generalizations of both.

Prior to the 1960s Anglo men dominated the study of Texas history. Anglo-American triumphalism and exceptionalism in the midst of a perilous, untamed frontier were the cornerstones of the dominant historical narrative. This narrative was made possible by – and reinforced – the continued marginalization of Mexican Texans in Texan society and politics during the nineteenth and twentieth century. Historians rarely discussed Tejanos in Texas' historical literature, and only treated them as foils to Anglo Americans when they did incorporate them.[13] When Mexicans (including Mexican Texans) were not featured as enemies to Anglo Texans, they were portrayed as marginal and subservient to their Euro-American betters. Though some writers, such as the University of Texas' Eugene C. Barker and Rubén Rendón Lozano (an

[13] Todd F. Smith, "Texas through 1845: A Survey of the Historical Literature of Recent Decades" *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly,* 113:3 (2010), 313.

amateur Tejano historian from San Antonio), called for a reexamination of the role of Tejanos in Texas' history, their criticisms of the era's Anglocentric narrative went largely unheeded.[14]

This changed in the 1970s. Tejano history featured heavily in the emerging field of Chicano Studies the United States. This new Historical awareness went hand-in-hand with the civil rights goals of the Chicano movement, prompting a generation of revisionist historians (such as the scholar-activist Rudolfo Acuña) who constructed an opposing historical narrative that illuminated how racism and imperialism on the part of *Norteamericanos* ignited cultural conflicts, civil war, violence, and Anglo oppression in Hispanics in Texas.[15] Before long the chauvinistic Anglocentric historical narrative had been effectively supplanted and dismantled, at least in academic circles.

This new narrative was not static. By the end of the 1980s, the Chicano-influenced school of history had already begun to change.[16] To paraphrase Texas historian Jesús F. de la Teja, a new cohort of historians trained to view history through a variety of perspectives and methodologies – sociology, psychology, economics, etc. – was searching for nuance rather than narrative, and exploring complexities that the ethnocentric perspectives of prior schools of thought had neglected to address.[17] This new generation of historians – both Chicano and Anglo – challenged the notion that Tejano-Anglo relations during the early nineteenth century could be reduced to

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[14] Eugene C. Barker, "Native Latin American Contribution to the Colonization and Independence of Texas " *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 46:4 (1943), 317-335; Rubén Rendón Lozano, *Viva Tejas: The Story of the Tejanos, the Mexican-born Patriots of the Texas Revolution* (San Antonio: Southern Literary Institute, 1936; 2d ed., San Antonio: Alamo Press, 1985).
[15] Perhaps the best-known work from this historical narrative is Acuña's *Occupied America;* Acuña, Rodolfo F. *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2007).
[16] De la Teja, "Forward," *Tejano Leadership in Mexican and Revolutionary Texas,* ix.
[17] *Ibid.,* ix.

conflict, conquest, and racial antipathy (though they all acknowledged the potent, even overwhelming, roles such factors played).

Several of these scholars pioneered the use of new lenses through which to analyze Tejano-Anglo relations. James Crisp postulated that the history of Anglo perceptions of Tejanos, and by extension Anglo-Tejano relations, had no central, unifying narrative.[18] Rather, Anglo attitudes toward Latin American peoples were complicated, mercurial, and often inconsistent. Inseperable from these opinions were changing notions of American (specifically Anglo-American) identity as well as the identity of Mexicans and Mexican Texans. Ultimately, such attitudes developed into cultural chauvinism and virulent racism. Arnoldo de León both complemented and challenged Crisp by analyzing the role racial attitudes first inculcated by Anglos in the United States played in Texas. He concluded that racism determined the nature of race relations in nineteenth century Texas rather than a developing sense of cultural chauvinism.[19]

Perhaps most importantly, David Montejano quite literally wrote the book on Anglo-Tejano relations in Texas: *Anglos and Tejanos in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986*.[20] He perceived Anglo-Tejano interactions, social bonds, and attitudes as economically predicated largely according to market forces. For their mutual (though very unequal) benefit, both Anglos and Tejanos established what he labeled a 'peace structure' – a social, political, and economic configuration that primarily benefited the leadership of the victorious Anglo population.[21] Such structures originated in the Republic of Texas during the 1830s and dominated the U.S.

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[18] James Ernest Crisp, "Anglo-Texan Attitudes toward the Mexican, 1821-1845," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University, 1976).
[19] Arnoldo de León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900 (*Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983).
[20] David Montejano, *Anglos and Tejanos in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986).
[21] *Ibid.*, 8.

borderlands following the Mexican-American war. Though terms such as 'victorious' and 'defeated' do not neatly apply to the messy racial politics of Mexican and independent Texas, the fact remains that peace structures allowed some Mexican populations to retain some degree of the character and culture of their communities.[22] For instance, the *Béxareños* of San Antonio forged social and economic alliances with Anglo elites that secured their position, albeit a diminished and ultimately temporary one, in the social and political landscape of Texas between 1821 and 1846. The Anglos of Victoria and Goliad, however, forcibly expelled the majority of their Tejano neighbors rather than construct such a peace structure.[23] These peace structures did not prevent the marginalization of Mexican communities and persons in Texas and the United States. Rather, they institutionalized and reinforced disparities and divisions between Anglos and Mexicans. These peace structures merely limited, and certainly did not prevent, the toll inflicted on Mexican Texans in the nineteenth century by warfare, racialized violence, and the transfer of wealth and power from Mexican to Anglo communities

Such peace structures likewise provoked changes to Tejano notions of their own identity. By the end of the nineteenth century, Mexican Texans largely constituted an impoverished working class. But a century earlier, Mexican Texans had been a dynamic society unto themselves, lead by a wealthy and politically active upper class that. Tejanos had developed a distinct cultural identity by at least 1770.[24] Their position on the *frontera*, or frontier, was vital to this sense of identity. Whereas Anglos saw the frontier as an expanse to be conquered, settled, and civilized (by Protestant Euro-Americans pursuing their ideal of Manifest Destiny, the Anglocentric narrative of Texan and American history which dominated the historiography prior

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[22] *Ibid.,* 8.
[23] Crisp, "Anglo-Texan Attitudes Toward the Mexican, 1821-1845," 340-341.
[24] Timothy M. Matovina, "Between Two Worlds," in *Tejano Journey, 1770-1850,* 3.

to 1960), Hispanic Americans used the *frontera* as line of defense against a hostile enemy. It was a fixed border. In New Spain and Mexico, Tejano settlements fended off indigenous peoples such as the Comanches and Apaches. Each *municipio* (municipality) served, theoretically, as both a civilian community and a military fortress.[25] This was easier said than done. In fact, the Tejano communities were losing the *frontera* in 1821 after a decade of war and political chaos.

According to scholars such as Andrés Tijerina and Timothy Matovina, this unique position along the *frontera* helped forge a Tejano identity distinct from that of New Spain and Mexico. Whereas American and Texan Anglos adopted a culture of individualism and self-sufficiency as a means of conquering the frontier, Tejano communities like Nacogdoches developed cultures of cooperation based on collective obligation and mutual survival; their obligation to the defense and maintenance of the *frontera* was not an individual task, but a societal one.[26] Additionally, mutual economic and political interests and enemies, along with a common language, religion, history and heritage, united the inhabitants of Hispanic Texas regardless of their racial status.[27] A Caddo-descended Adaeseño was just as much a Tejano (give or take a few of the odd quirks insular Nacogdochians had developed over the generations) as a Béxareño Canary Islander or a *mestizo* from La Bahía.

Whereas the Tejano identity remained relatively constant, their citizenship did not. From 1821 to 1846, four governments – along with a slew of filibusters, rebels, and American Indian peoples, both indigenous to Texas and tribes displaced by the United States – laid claim to Texas. As a result, Tejanos increasingly defined themselves as a people apart, not simply Spanish or Mexican. Furthermore, Anglo disdain for all things Mexican beginning in the 1830s

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[25] Andrés Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 199), 4, 26.
[26] Andrés Tijerina, "Under the Mexican Flag." In *Tejano Journey, 1770-1850,* 35.
[27] Poyo, "Introdiction", in *Tejano Journey,* xiii.

encouraged this solidification of the distinct sense of Tejano ethnic and communal identity which had begun developing in the 18th century.[28]

The works of the aforementioned historians, and of those who have relied on their scholarship, focus overwhelmingly on the Tejano communities of the San Antonio and Guadalupe River valleys during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This is only natural – the vast majority of the Tejano population and Tejano political power was concentrated here during this era. As such, a sound scholarly foundation for further study already exists here. However, Texas' Tejano population and its relationship with its Anglo neighbors during the early nineteenth century remains fertile ground for research. Anglo immigration utterly transformed Texas during this period, and Tejano-Anglo relationships were key to this transformation. In his 2003 article "Whither Tejano History," Arnoldo De León argued that the history of Tejanos – and, by extension, Texas as a whole – remains yet to be written, and must discard generalizations of race, oppressor, and oppressed in favor of a more nuanced narrative.[29] To form such a complete picture of Tejano-Anglo relations in this era, the nature of these relations in Nacogdoches must be examined.

The pattern of failed assimilation, ensuing conflict, and racialized hierarchy between Tejanos and Anglos in Texas fits neatly into the history of Nacogdoches from 1821 to 1846. In the 1820s, Adaeseños tried to integrate an uncooperative and ever-growing Anglo community. By the early 1830s, this attempt proved a failure. The remainder of that decade was consumed by conflicts that often pitted Tejanos against Mexico or their Anglo neighbors – even against fellow Tejanos. In the 1840s, however, as American annexation drew closer, the Tejanos of

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[28] Timothy M. Matovina, *Tejano Religion and Ethnicity, San Antonio, 1821-1860 (*Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), 48.
[29] Arnoldo de León, "Whither Tejano History: Origins, Development, and Status," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 106:3 (2003), 55.

Nacogdoches allied with and relied on members of the Anglo community to preserve what autonomy and rights they could, forging a peace structure of their own. Battered but not broken, the Tejanos of Nacogdoches had managed to survive a chaotic quarter century by 1846; meanwhile, their Anglo neighbors reveled in their admittance to the United States.

Conflicts such as the Fredonia Rebellion, the Texas Revolution, and the Córdova Rebellion occupy most of the historiography of Nacogdoches in this era. It is thus easy to assume that conflict defined the Adaeseño-Anglo relationship. This is not entirely true. Members of the Nacogdoches community, rather, waged all of these conflicts against perceived outsiders. Race was not insignificant by any means, but it was not the only motivating factor. In fact, Nacogdochians, whether Tejano or Anglo, often maintained their otherwise rocky coexistence, despite their conflicts, by cooperating for the sake of mutual benefit and the welfare of Nacogdoches.

1.2. Terminology and Questions of Identity

Clear terminology is essential for any discussion of race, ethnicity, identity, and their place in history. This is especially true in Texas, where race is, historically, complicated, convoluted, and contested. The term *Tejano* translates literally to "Texan." However, (in the context of history, historiography, and cultural identity) the term specifically applies to Texans of Mexican decent: Spaniards, Hispanicized native peoples, *mestizos* (persons of mixed heritage), and others who assimilated into Hispanic Texan culture. Modern scholarship often applies the term to the Texans of Mexican descent and/or extraction during the early- to mid-nineteenth century. Tejanos first used the term as a self-referent as early as January 1833, though

it appears in writing for the first time nearly a decade earlier in the correspondences of Miguel Ramos Arispe, the author of Mexico's constitution.[30] Eighteenth and nineteenth century Tejanos recognized a sense of common cultural and political identity between their communities, though they ethnically identified themselves, and were identified, as Mexicans, Mexican Texans, or Mexican Americans.[31] Terms such as Texas Mexican, Mexican Texan, or Hispanic Texan are generally synonymous with Tejano. The term Anglo, on the other hand, applies to Anglophonic North Americans, especially from the United States. These Anglos are typically of Anglo-Saxon/Anglo-Celtic – that is, British Isles – descent, though European Americans who assimilated into Anglo-American culture would themselves be considered Anglos.[32] Terms such as European American, Anglo American, Anglo Texan, North American (*Norte Americano/ Norteamericano*) or simply American are interchangeable.[33] For nineteenth century Texans, the terms Mexican and American were indicators of ethnic identity as much as, or more so than, citizenship.

The definition of Texas itself is also complicated and changed during the nineteenth century. Under Mexican rule, Texas only ever legally encompassed the lands between the Nueces and Sabine Rivers. Furthermore, Texas was not an independent political entity, only a region within the State of Coahuila y Tejas (whose Coahuilan and Tejano inhabitants were referred to collectively as *Coahuiltejanos*). The Republic of Texas, however, claimed the Río Grande as it's Western border. Not only was the basis for this claim flimsy, but the Republic

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[30] Adán Benavides, Jr., "Tejano," Handbook of Texas Online, accessed January 02, 2017, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/pft07.
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] European communities that resisted full assimilation, such as Czechs and Germans in Central Texas, would not have considered themselves Anglos or have been described as such.
[33] Though the term American is applicable to any inhabitant of the Americas, the United States has claimed a particular privilege toward its use.

never managed to successfully establish itself beyond the Nueces. Instead, Texas and Mexico violently contested the territories between the Nueces and Río Grande in the 1830s and 1840s until the issue was forcibly resolved by the United States in the Mexican American War. As Vicente Córdova's Rebellion demonstrated, the Republic often struggled to control territory to the east of the Nueces River as well. Indeed, the Republic of Texas never exercised any authority over the vast majority of the territory it purported to own. Such changes to the borders of Texas also altered the Tejano community. The Hispanic inhabitants of the lower Río Grande Valley, though historically linked to Tejanos, only became fully included in the Tejano community after the United States established its control over the region following the Mexican-American War.

Texas itself shifted governments repeatedly in the nineteenth century, and the terminology employed in this paper shall reflect this. Just as Spanish Texas, Mexican Texas, and American Texas refer to the region when under the control of each of these governments, the term Republican Texas refers to the time between 1836 and 1846 in which Texas acted an independent state. The term does not imply the political ideologies of Texans of that era, though most were liberal republicans as Mexican and American Texans would understand the terms in the nineteenth century. The term Texan itself is also complicated. To many nineteenth century Tejanos and Anglos, the term "Texan," or "Texian," could only properly be applied to members of their own racial community. The term "Texan" shall herein be used to describe citizens of Texas, particularly as members of a larger state, Mexico or the United States.[34] The term "Texian" shall be used for citizens the Republic of Texas, though it is applied in other writings to

[34] The term citizen also requires clarification in a contested borderland such as Texas during much of the nineteenth century. Citizens were the inhabitants who participated in and exercized some sense of loyalty to the social and political community of Texas. Non-Hispanicized native peoples were excluded or maintained their independence from Texas' politics and much of its society. These include the Cherokee or the Comanche. Laws from the period of the Republic of Texas generally referred to such peoples as "untaxed Indians."

Texan citizens of Mexico or Spain, or to Anglos in particular. Neither term will connote race or ethnicity in this paper.

Such terms are – historically – fluid. Prior to 1836, many Anglo-Texans insisted they were loyal Mexican citizens, though few, if any, would call themselves "Mexican." Many referred to themselves as "American" – and, in time, so did Tejanos who sought to establish their loyalty to the Anglo-majority Republic of Texas or United States. Nonetheless, the terms American and Mexican both held ethnic connotations tin nineteenth century Texas. Similarly, the term Tejano implies a distinct identity beyond geography. Tejanos had developed a unique cultural identity distinct from other provinces of Mexico during the Spanish colonial period as early as the 1770s.[35] This identity – a common culture, language, and historical experience – makes Tejanos a distinct ethnic population by the reckoning of modern scholars.[36] Their relationship with Spain and Mexico was often strained and contentious – and, in the case of the latter, brief – but based on conventional political, administrative, and cultural ties.

No Tejano community embodies this quite as well as that of Nacogdoches. It was independent and culturally distinct even by Tejano standards, with a unique history and cultural identity. The term Adaeseños is used to refer to Nacogdoches' Tejanos due to that community's specific heritage.[37] Nowadays, the inhabitants of Nacogdoches refer to themselves as Nacogdochians regardless of racial background.

The question of identity is vital to understanding the Tejano and Anglo communities of Nacogdoches. Conflicts of identity dominate the history of Texas in the early nineteenth century

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[35] Gerald E. Poyo, "Introduction," *Tejano Journey, 1770-1850,* ed. Gerald E. Poyo (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), viii.
[36] David Montejano, *Anglos and Tejanos in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 5.
[37]Compare Adaeseños to the more familiar *Béxareños*, used to refer to the Tejanos of San Antonio de Béxar.

as people and communities adopted various self-referents: Spanish or Mexican, Mexican or Anglo, Tejano or Mexican, Centralist conservative or liberal Federalist, Texian or Mexican or American. For the first half of the nineteenth century, various camps fought to enforce their own identities over Texas. These struggles amounted to a contest over the identity of Texas – and, by extension, the identity of Nacogdoches.

1.3. Research and Methodology

Whereas the secondary sources discussed prior are wonderful resources for understanding broader events in the history of Texas from 1821 to 1846, as well as the historiographical models for analyzing Tejano-Anglo relations during this period, they do not reveal much about the history of Nacogdoches in particular. Thankfully, Nacogdoches was a hub of Mexican and Texian government from 1821 and 1836, and its municipal archives (the Nacogdoches Archives) are a well-preserved and informative repository for information. A county clerk for Nacogdoches County, Robert Bruce Blake, collected, organized, and, in many cases, translated the Archives in the early 20th century. Blake was himself an amateur historian, and he understood the importance of the historical record he had been entrusted with. The Robert Bruce Blake Collection at the University of Texas at Austin' Briscoe Center for American History is his legacy – seventy-five volumes containing transcripts of the Archives, eighteen further volumes of supplementary archival material, two archival calendars, and several boxes of files containing further historically significant documents. Blake even went so far as to include copies of pertinent documents originally located outside of Nacogdoches, particularly documents originally stored in the Béxar Archives (San Antonio de Bexar was the administrative center of Texas in the 1820s

and 1830s). The collection includes government records, official correspondences, censuses, legal documents, bills of sale, court records, and innumerable other materials pivotal to forming a historical account of Nacogdoches and Texas as a whole. These archives are particularly important for accessing the perspectives and experiences of Adaeseños. No Nacogdoches-born Tejano of this time period left much in the way of a personal archive or paper trail, but the day-to-day functioning of the municipal government and its largely Tejano staff provide invaluable insight to their historical experience.

The Nacogdoches Archives are the foundation for this research project, but they are not the sole source of primary research material. Censuses, law codes, and the records of legislative sessions all provide invaluable information as to the nature of Nacogdoches and its ethnic communities. Perhaps the most significant documents for the purposes of this paper, however, are the private accounts and correspondences of individuals living in or passing through Nacogdoches at the time. Numerous accounts recorded by both visitors and residents remain well preserved. Some have been published as independent works, others are archived as research collections. To understand how the Mexican and American ethnic communities of the town interacted, it is necessary to understand how they perceived each other. The personal writings of persons such as Mexican General Manuel de Mier y Terán, or of Texan statesman and Nacogdoches resident Thomas Jefferson Rusk, are invaluable resources for understanding how individuals living in Nacogdoches perceived and experienced the history studied and analyzed herein.

Chapter 2: Nacogdoches: The Eastern Frontier and the Challenge of Assimilation, 1821-1832

"In this part of Tejas every kind of public authority had disappeared…"[38]

If one visited Nacogdoches in the late 1820s, we would soon reach the conclusion that the assimilation of Anglo immigrants into Texas by the Mexican population was an utter failure. Tensions between Anglo newcomers and native-born Mexicans in Texas first erupted into armed conflict in Nacogdoches in 1826. This conflict had less to do with racial antipathy, however, than it did with the ambitions of a troublesome Anglo *empresario*, Haden E. Edwards, as well as the history and character of Nacogdoches itself. The town had long been a chaotic and ramshackle community, and Edwards' attempts to impose order – his own order – displayed both the divides and common interests between Texas' Anglo and Mexican communities. Official reports on the troubled community after the debacle portray a community in crisis and foreshadowed the Texas Revolution. Yet within a few short years, Nacogdoches was a model community for Anglo assimilation largely due to the formation of a municipal government that both represented the Tejano and Anglo ethnic communities and supported Anglo immigration and interests. Nacogdoches had successfully assimilated newcomers prior to 1821. By 1830, it seemed that Texas' experiment with Anglo immigration was beginning to pay off in Nacogdoches.

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[38] Manuel de Mier y Terán, *Texas by Terán,* edited by Jack Jackson, translated by John Wheat *(*Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000*),* 95.

2.1. Nacogdoches and its People Prior to 1821

In order to understand Nacogdoches on the eve of mass Anglo immigration in 1821, a summary of its history up until then is necessary. On July 8, 1716, Captain Don Domingo Ramón and Friar Antonio Margil de Jesús founded a mission, one of six in the forested hills of Eastern Texas, approximately seven leagues (twenty miles) from the Angelina River – Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Los Nacogdoches. These missions were the only formal Spanish presence in East Texas for much of the eighteenth century. Don Ramón and Friar Margil's mission served the hamlets of the Nacogdoche, a Caddoan Hasinai indigenous people who, along with various other indigenous societies, were the targets of evangelization and colonization efforts by the Spanish. The mission´s first inhabitants were, like those of early San Antonio de Béxar and La Bahía, Coahuilan settlers – Spaniards, Hispanicized *Indios*, and mestizos.[39] The occupants, however, abandoned it in the face of French aggression shortly after in 1719. In 1720, however, the missions were reestablished, this time with two *presidios* (forts) in the vicinity.

The primary Spanish settlement in the area was the mission of Linares de los Adaes, near present-day Robeline, Louisiana, and fifteen miles west of the French settlement of Natchitoches.[40] The inhabitants of Los Adeas, called Adaeseños, were themselves mostly Hispanicized Native Americans, specifically Adaes Caddos. These Adaeseños intermarried with individuals of other Native American, Spanish, African, and, in time, French or Anglo descent. Los Adaes served as the region's primary settlement administrative center for fifty years – as

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[39] Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836,* 18.
[40]James E. Corbin, "Indian Life in East Texas," In *Nacogdoches: Wilderness Outpost to Modern City, 1779-1979,* ed. Archie P. McDonald (Burnet, Texas: Eakin Press, 1980), 7; Archie P. McDonald, "Early Spanish Involvement in Nacogdoches: Missions," in *Nacogdoches: Wilderness Outpost to Modern City,* 19.

well as a center of often-illicit trade with French Louisiana. Nacogdoches and the other missions meanwhile failed to Christianize or Hispanicize the indigenous populations, and instead often relied on them for food and other necessities.[41] Such problems, as well as the de-escalation of Franco-Spanish rivalry in Texas, prompted New Spain to recall its East Texas missions and settlements to San Antonio de Béxar in 1773. A few stubborn holdouts remained, residing at the Ybarbo family ranch while the remainder made the trek to Béxar.[42] The relocated Adaeseños, under the leadership of one of their own, Antonio Gil Ybarbo, soon began clamoring to return to East Texas. Ybarbo eventually managed to gain the Viceroy of New Spain's blessing to do so – provided they not go too near the border of French Louisiana. The 400 Adaeseños (including fifteen slaves of African descent) did just that, relocating to the former site of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Nacogdoches. Ybarbo asked forgiveness rather than permission of the Governor of the Province, Juan María Vicentio de Riperda, the very same man who had evacuated East Texas. De Riperda legitimized the community by granting it the legal status of a *pueblo* (village) and reestablished the Spanish presence in East Texas.[43]

The town prospered. *El Camino Real*, Texas' primary commercial roadway, ran through *la Plaza Principal*, the town square. Ybarbo's home, referred to as the Stone House or Stone Fort, lay on the *Plaza*'s northeast corner.[44] By 1800 the population, inflated somewhat by Native Americans fleeing the increased activity of the Comanches, exceeded 600 persons (660 by the

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[41] Corbin, "Indian Life in East Texas," 7-10; McDonald, "Early Spanish Involvement in Nacogdoches Missions,"11-14.
[42] Alternative spellings abound, including Ibarvo, Ybarvo, and Y'barbo.
[43]McDonald, "Early Spanish Involvement in Nacogdoches Missions,"*, 17.*
[44] James McReynolds, "Spanish Nacogdoches," in *Nacogdoches: Wilderness Outpost to Modern City, 1779-1979,* 21-22.

1803 census), exceeding that of La Bahía and second only to San Antonio in Texas.[45] In many ways, it was a typical Tejano town. Around eighty percent of the inhabitants (still referred to as Adaeseños) lived on *ranchos* and small farms in the town's hinterland. Infant mortality rates were high (one in four), as were death rates amongst fighting-age men, who perished in skirmishes against hostile indigenous peoples or the various rapscallions, rustlers, and thieves who haunted the colonial borderlands.[46]

But trade, both with indigenous cultures such as the Comanches and with French – and, soon, American – Louisiana, was the lifeblood of Nacogdoches. From here, furs, livestock, and other goods flowed along El Camino Real into the Tejano heartland of the Guadalupe and San Antonio Rivers or into Louisiana. Between 1810 and 1815, an average of twenty thousand deerskins and four hundred horses (destined for the plantations of the Southern United States) passed through the town.[47] Despite its economic importance, Nacogdoches only had an intermittent formal military presence. Elsewhere in Texas, military deployments provided Tejano communities with settlers and ties to the Mexican interior. Instead, trade drew in Bexareños, French creoles, African Americans, Native Americans, and Anglos. These communities were too small to maintain any independence, and the newcomers married into the Adaeseños. Families such as the Simms, Eldees, O'Connor's, Lópezes, Fontáns, and Córdovas all traced part of their heritage to the British Isles and United States. Gil Ybarbo himself was likely part African.[48] Nacogdoches also maintained strong ties to other Tejano communities. Branches of several

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[45] Carolyn Reeves Ericson, *Nacogdoches – Gateway to Texas: A Biographical Directory, 1773 - 1849 (*Fort Worth: Andrew/Curtis Printing Company, 1974), xix.
[46] Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836,* 19.
[47] Reeves, *Nacogdoches*, 8.
[48] Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836,* 18-19.

prominent Tejano families, such as the Arrochas and Menchacas, called Nacogdoches home; the Seguíns owned property there as well.

This cultural confluence, along with the general isolation of Nacogdoches, produced a unique community. Tejanos were already a distinct subculture in Mexico due to their isolation and unique *frontera* heritage. They spoke an increasingly distinct and rustic dialect of Spanish and took pride in a way of life that seemed foreign to Mexicans from other provinces.[49] Nowhere was this more obvious than in Nacogdoches, whose local dialect included various Frenchisms and whose citizenry appeared alien to visitors from Mexico's interior. "They are not Mexicans except by birth," declared one such observer, who noted "they even speak Spanish with a marked incorrectness" and found them more like "North Americans" (Anglos, though Francophones could be included) than interior Mexicans.[50]

Events in the Mexican interior, however, soon disrupted the insular border town. Opposition to Spanish rule was gaining traction throughout New Spain. Tejanos themselves had long been dissatisfied with their distant and seemingly disinterested government, believing their contributions to maintaining the *frontera* to be unappreciated in Mexico City and Madrid. Tejanos often flouted loosely enforced Spanish directives, as seen in the actions of Gil Ybarbo. But Spain was quickly loosing control of its American colonies. The first signs of trouble occurred when an Irish-American immigrant to Nacogdoches, Philip Nolan, who was involved in the borderlands trade in mustangs, was killed by Spanish troops in March of 1804 for participating in a vague plot with Tejano malcontents against Spanish authority. A more serious challenge to Spanish authority arrived six years later. In 1810, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla

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[49] Tijerina, "Under the Mexican Flag," 35-36.
[50] José María Sánchez, "A Trip to Texas in 1828," translator Carlos E. Castañeda, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 29:4 (April 1926), 283.

initiated a war for independence in the interior provinces, which would last more than a decade. Texas soon became a front in this war. In 1811, revolutionaries under Juan Bautista de las Casas, a retired military officer living in Béxar, briefly seized control of Nacogdoches. In August of 1812, more revolutionaries under the command of José Gutiérrez de Lara entered from American Louisiana, accompanied by an American named Augustus Magee and a host of Anglo adventurers and idealists. Royalist forces, encouraged by the people of Nacogdoches, fled before them.[51] The Nacogdoches militia did not. Gutiérrez de Lara and Magee's rebels in fact recruited from the Adaeseños before proceeding west toward La Bahía and Béxar.

Royalist troops under General Joaquín de Arredondo crushed the rebels on August 18, 1813, at the Battle of Medina, near San Antonio, and proceeded to march eastward. Arredondo intended to eradicate the rebellion by any means necessary. Adaeseños, fearful for their lives after the veritable massacre at Medina, fled. Despite being abandoned, Nacogdoches remained active in the collapse of Spanish governance in Mexico. On June 21, 1819, an American filibuster named James Long (likely in cahoots with business and political interests in the United States) arrived to proclaim Texas' independence from an apparently crumbling Spanish empire. The Spanish swiftly sent 650 troops to run him and his followers back across the border into Louisiana. This, however, was the last gasp of Spanish rule in Nacogdoches. In 1821, Spain finally relinquished their tenuous grip on Mexico – and, by extension, Texas. A new, aspiringly democratic government took shape in Mexico City. The Mexican republic formally adopted a federalist constitution in 1824.

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[51] James Gallaway Partin, "A History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877," Master's Thesis, The University of Texas at Austin (1968), 110.

Between 1813 and 1821, abandoned Nacogdoches became an ideal place for the most lucrative industry in Texas – horse trafficking.[52] Americans seeking to supply the ever-growing plantation economy of the Southern United States poured into the ruins of the town to meet with Native American horse traders, primarily Comanches, who sold livestock from their own herds as well as horses obtained from wild mustang herds and the vulnerable Tejano ranches of the San Antonio and Guadalupe River valleys. In 1820 alone, $90,000 worth of horses was exchanged between Native Americans and Anglo merchants.[53] Firearms were often the currency of choice. The mustang trade allowed Nacogdoches to linger until Mexico secured independence in 1821.

2.2. Rebuilding and Rebellion in Nacogdoches

Mexican independence promised a new beginning for Nacogdoches. The civil war and the threat of royalist retaliation were over. Adaeseños could return home. Anglo Americans, however, hungry for cheap land, perceived Texas as an opportunity. Some merely hoped for a new life in Texas, while others hoped to eventually challenge the newly independent Mexican republic. Either way, the road into Texas began in Nacogdoches.

When Erasmo Seguín, a Béxareño and the father of Tejano statesman Juan Seguín, passed through Nacogdoches in July of 1821, only eight buildings remained: the Stone House, a Catholic church, and six other adobe structures. Seguín only found 36 people in the town.[54] A travel account from William Dewees, an Anglo who passed through a month prior, noted a

[52] Torget, *Seeds of Empire,* 37.
[53] *Ibid,* 49.
[54] Eugene C. Barker, ed., "The Journal of Stephen F. Austin on His First Trip to Texas, 1821," by Stephen F. Austin, edited by Eugene C. Barker, *The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association*, VII:4 (April, 1904), 288-89.

population of approximately one hundred "Spaniards, French, Americans, and free negroes" lingering in the "very desolate place." Dewees also noted that an Anglo, a "Mr. Dill" – James Dill, that is – served as *alcalde* and was the sole authority in the town.[55] Dill himself reported 77 inhabitants in a census taken February of 1822.[56]

Seguín was returning from Louisiana, where he had proclaimed a general pardon for Adaeseños who had incurred the wrath of Spanish authorities (Spain had not yet handed over authority over its colonies to the fledgling Mexican government) and invited them to return to Texas.[57] Adaeseño refugees soon poured into East Texas. One hundred and thirty-six individuals from both Louisiana and Béxar returned in 1823, starting a constant stream of Nacogdochian repatriation.[58] Tejanos, however, were not the only individuals to come pouring into Nacogdoches. Mexico opened Texas to Anglo American settlement in 1821. Officially, this migration was under the direction of *empresario*s such as Stephen F. Austin or Haden E. Edwards. Unofficially, Anglo Americans had been traversing the Sabine and settling in New Spain for decades, with or without permission to do so. *Alcalde* Dill complained of numerous Anglo American squatters in nearby Ayish Bayou, present-day San Augustine, as early as January of 1822.[59] But with Texas ravaged by the war for independence and brutal Comanche raids, Mexico desperately needed settlers to maintain the *frontera*. The total Tejano population in 1820 was only five thousand. They could no longer prevent Comanche raiders, incentivized and

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[55] William B. Dewees, *Letter From an Early Settler of Texas*, Louisville, KY: New Albany Tribune Print, 1858), digitized by Google from the New York Public Library Americana Collection, https://archive.org/details/lettersfromanea00kimbgoog, 21.
[56] James McReynolds, "Spanish Nacogdoches," in *Nacogdoches: Wilderness Outpost to Modern City, 1779-1979,* 26.
[57] Torget, *Seeds of Empire,* 57.
[58] Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836,*19.
[59] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection at the Eugene C. Barker Center for Texas History at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas), Volume XXII, 39.

increasingly well-armed by the Anglo demand for horses and the perceived weakness of the young Mexican republic, from penetrating the Mexican interior. The central and state government needed to repopulate the Texas *frontera*. And Mexicans themselves were unwilling to immigrate to distant, dangerous Texas. Mexico hoped that Anglo colonies would fill the gaps between Tejano settlements along the vast Texas *frontera*.

Mexico also perceived Anglo immigration as an economic opportunity. The cotton industry had brought great wealth, investment, and economic development to the Southern United States. Coahuiltejanos (especially Tejanos) hoped that Anglo immigrants would introduce this economic model into Texas and similarly stimulate the economy of Coahuila y Tejas. Mexican authorities thus allowed largely unfettered Anglo settlement in Texas, requiring nothing more than an oath of loyalty – often unenforced.

Coahuila y Tejas relied on relatively inexpensive land in Texas (compared to the United States) to incentivize Anglo immigration. A cotton boom in the Southern United States ensured land prices exceeded the capabilities of many entrepreneurial-minded farmers. In 1820, land prices averaged at $1.25 per acre in cotton-growing regions of the U.S. A government quarter section of 160 acres could be bought for $200, but there was little to no credit available for such a purchase. But in Mexican Texas land could be purchased for a pittance – if it needed to be purchased at all, as squatters such as those in Ayish Bayou soon discovered. Anglo American immigrants could obtain nearly five thousand acres in Mexican Texas for $100 in taxes in titles. Seeing as no independent farmer without sufficient labor – slaves, for the Southern Anglo Americans and Louisianan francophones who entered Texas in the early nineteenth century – could utilize so much acreage, much of this land was purchased as an investment rather than as

productive farmland.[60] The ensuing boom in speculation drove wealthy individuals from both the United States and Mexico to become *empresario*s, managing and settling immense land grants in the fecund coastal plains of Texas. Nacogdoches, the closest town to the American border and situated amongst the fertile riverbeds of East Texas, proved particularly attractive to many American immigrants. By 1828, the population of Nacogdoches and its environs approached or exceeded one thousand – a far cry from the 77 persons reported by Dill in 1823.

Nacogdoches had long assimilated newcomers: Native Americans, French creoles, free Africans – but never in such numbers, and never so rapidly. Anglo newcomers would soon numerically overwhelm the Adaeseños; as a whole, Anglos soon comprised the majority of the population of the *municipio* of Nacogdoches. Though typically translated as "municipality", *municipio* should not be understood as a necessarily physically small political jurisdiction. The *municipio* of Nacogdoches stretched from the Neches River to the Sabine, including Anglo communities such as Jonesboro, Pecan Point, Ayish Bayou, and Teneha. Despite an order from the Nacogdoches *alcalde* for newcomers to present themselves before the local government and swear allegiance to the Mexican Constitution, only a handful of Anglo immigrants did so. Anglos in outlying communities objected to the cost or length of a journey to Nacogdoches.[61] Tejanos soon began questioning whether these immigrants could integrate into Mexican society.

The primary test of Anglo willingness to assimilate came with the annual elections for *alcalde*, the sole government authority in the Nacogdoches *municipio*. Erasmo Seguín appointed James Dill *alcalde* in 1821. The position soon became an elected office, however, and Juan Seguín defeated Dill to become the *alcalde* in 1823. A series of Tejanos and Anglos who had

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[60] Anna Carolina Castillo Crimm "Finding Their Way," in *Tejano Journey, 1770-1850,* ed. Gerald E. Poyo, 111-124 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 113.
[61] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), XXV, 3-4.

immigrated into Texas decades prior and assimilated into the Adaeseño community – Patricio de Torres, Pedro and Luis Procella, and Sam Norris – succeeded Seguín. Repeatedly, the ever-growing Anglo population claimed they were unfairly excluded from their own municipal government.[62] Though travelling to Nacogdoches and participating in elections where Spanish was the language of official government business likely irked many Anglo immigrants, the losses their favored candidates suffered at the ballot likely stemmed from higher Adaeseño voter participation rates – and the fact that many of these Anglos were not citizens. In fact, a clear preference for Tejanos and Tejano-backed candidates can clearly be seen in every local election in Nacogdoches until the beginning of the Texas Revolution.

Yet the solutions to easing immigrant concerns were also amenable to the Adaeseños. Nacogdochians wanted a fully-formed municipal government, an *ayuntamiento*, with multiple elected positions. An *ayuntamiento* would not only allow Anglos greater opportunity for representation, but also provide Nacogdoches with a fully staffed and more efficient government. Neighboring Anglo communities included in the *municipio*, however, were requesting to divide the *municipio* and to form their own *ayuntamientos* as early as 1824. Specifically, they desired that the lands between the Attoyac and Sabine Rivers become a separate "district" (their petitions were invariably in English).[63] They also petitioned for laws to be published in English, for the appointment of government officials to record, adjust, and issue land claims in East Texas, and to create banners for their small local militias. By their own estimation, the Anglo communities east of Nacogdoches comprised two thirds of the *municipio*'s population of 1600. Several of these Anglo petitions received the support of Peter Ellis Bean, a longtime resident and government

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[62] Partin, "A History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877," 121; Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836,* 29.
[63] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), Supplement 10, 281.

Indian agent, as well as individuals with Spanish or vaguely Spanish surnames, Pueticos and "Klasquez."[64] Adaeseños likely agreed with the petitioners that East Texas displayed a disturbing and distinct "lack of government."[65] Anglos also fretted over the validity of land grants issued to Anglos who had participated in the Gutierrez-Magee Expedition and the validity of the land claims of another Anglo, Edmund Quirk, who accused several recent immigrants of squatting on his land. The *Jefe Politico* (Political Chief, a regional governor) of Texas stationed in San Antonio de Béxar, José Antonio Saucedo, dismissed the petitions, the land grants, and questions as to the legitimacy of the Quirk grant. He found the Anglos insistence on self-rule and disrespect for Mexican norms – as well as their failure to complete proper immigration procedures – infuriating. Eventually, the governor of Coahuila y Tejas and the Minister of War and Marine overruled Saucedo on the Gutierrez grants, but that was the only concession made to the *municipio*'s Anglos at the time.[66] Overall, the regional government in Béxar and the State government in Saltillo saw little need to concern themselves with the internal politics of tiny, out-of-the-way Nacogdoches, particularly its unruly Anglos.

That swiftly changed beginning in 1825. Haden E. Edwards, an Anglo Kentuckian who first arrived in East Texas in 1823 and anticipated Nacogdoches' appeal to immigrants and its economic potential, severely tested the assimilation process in East Texas when he initiated the first major conflict between Tejanos and Anglo newcomers in Nacogdoches. When Edwards first entered Texas, he quickly befriended Stephen F. Austin and proceeded to apply for an *empresario* grant, which he obtained on April 14, 1825. The grant covered a huge swath of East Texas, including several already established communities – among them Nacogdoches – on

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[64] *Ibid*., Supplement 10, 278-282; "Klasquez" is perhaps a poorly written or transcribed rendering of the Spanish surname Velasquez.
[65] *Ibid*., Supplement 10, 280.
[66] *Ibid*., Supplement 10, 278-282, 287, 318.

which he could settle up to 800 families. On September 25, Edwards posted notices in Nacogdoches demanding that all landholders present documentation verifying their claims to him. A second notice followed on November 12 repeating the first.[67] Without documentation, any claims would be forfeit and sold. Only 32 such grants that verified land claims in Nacogdoches and its immediate vicinity existed prior to 1825. The evacuation and warfare that decimated Nacogdoches in the decade prior certainly did not lend itself to a clear legal record. Many Nacodochians lacked proper documentation for the land they inhabited, relying instead on a common community memory.

Though Edwards ultimately only sold a single piece of land, it was enough to startle the Adaeseños and other old settlers of Nacogdoches. Furthermore, Edwards proved willing to target his fellow Anglo immigrants. In an account of the area made several years later, Mexican General Manuel de Mier y Terán encountered a Tennessean called "Maclín" (likely William McLean) who fled Nacogdoches when Edwards ("to whose aims he did not wish to contribute", according to de Mier y Terán) demanded one hundred pesos of him and seized his land.[68] Perhaps the most prominent complaint filed against Edwards came from William Taylor, who wrote to state governor Don Rafael González in February of 1826. Taylor accused Edwards of demanding at least $600 for Taylor's already legitimate land claim, and lambasted the government for allowing a man "disposed to ruin" so much power.[69] González and Saucedo discussed the Taylor letter in their own correspondences regarding the increasingly troublesome *empresario*.

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[67] Partin, "A History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877," 126.
[68] Manuel de Mier y Terán, *Texas by Terán,* edited by Jack Jackson, translated by John Wheat. *(Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), 73.*
[69] W. Taylor to Gov. Don Rafeal Gonzalez, February 15, 1826, Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), Supplement 10, 315.

Edwards had already begun to vex state authorities in Béxar and Saltillo prior to Taylor's 1826 accusations. In December of 1825, the annual election for *alcalde* pitted Sam Norris, a long-time resident of Nacogdoches, against Chichester Chaplin, Edwards' son-in-law. Norris was expected to win and consequently to serve as a check on the *empresario*. Surprisingly – or perhaps not so surprisingly given the oversight of local elections fell to Edwards as *empresario* – Chaplin won, and Edwards soon wrote to *Jefe Politico* Saucedo to confirm the results. Edwards also wrote to Saucedo complaining about those Nacogdochians who contested the election results and his actions as *empresario*, primarily outgoing *alcalde* Luis Procella and militia captain José Antonio Sepulveda.[70] Meanwhile, those same Nacogdochians wrote to Saucedo alleging that Edwards had allowed squatters who had never obtained Mexican citizenship to participate in the election to Chaplin's benefit. Saucedo decided against Edwards, invalidating Chaplin's election and declaring that Chaplin had seized the office and archives "without authority."[71] On March 19, 1826, Norris informed Chaplin that Saucedo had overturned the election. Chaplin refused to give up the position and the municipal archives without first seeing the letter from Saucedo; Norris replied that it was at his home and invited Chaplin to come see. Chaplin, however, demanded a formal presentation of the letter as well as time to organize the archives for the transfer. Suspicious of Chaplin, Norris called on the militia to oversee the transfer of power – at which point Chaplin dropped his demands and handed over the office and archives to Norris.[72]

Haden Edwards and his supporters continued sending a stream of indignant letters to Saucedo. The *Jefe Politico* was not impressed, going so far as to nullify Edwards' proclamations

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[70] Partin, "A History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877," 127.
[71] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), Supplement 10, 316.
[72] Partin, "A History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877," 126- 128.

demanding land titles from persons whose land claims predated his *empresario* contract, and labeling Edwards' notices "contrary to the sovereignty of the nation and the state."[73] Furthermore, Saucedo told *Alcalde* Norris that, if Edwards persisted "acting against the laws," Norris could arrest the *empresario* and send him to Béxar for disciplining.[74] Norris responded by affirming that the militia, despite its poverty, remained loyal to Mexico.[75] Edwards, meanwhile, went to the United States to recruit settlers, while his brother Benjamin served as *empresario* in his stead. If Haden was possibly malicious in his handling of the contract, Benjamin was inept. He could neither speak nor write Spanish and showed less understanding of Nacogdoches' still very volatile politics than his brother. His bungling did nothing to ease the now very suspicious Mexican government. The President of Mexico himself and the government of Coahuila y Tejas both independently rescinded Edwards' *empresario* contract, delivering their decisions to Saucedo for their enforcement. Though informed in late spring, Saucedo waited several months until November to task Norris and Sepulveda with enforcing the order. This coincided with Haden Edwards' return to Nacogdoches, where he was dismayed to learn of the course of events. Edwards had invested fifty thousand dollars into his colony.[76] He would not relinquish it without a fight.

On November 22, 1826, nearly forty men rode into Nacogdoches from Ayish Bayou under he leadership of Martin Palmer, and arrested Edwards, Norris, and Sepulveda. With Edwards' grant imperiled, so were their own landholdings. They attempted to arrest former *alcalde* (now postmaster) Patrcio del Torres, along with an Anglo named James Gaines who was

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[73] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), Supplement 10, 324.
[74] *Ibid.,* Supplement 10, 327.
[75] *Ibid*., Supplement 10, 368.
[76] Archie P. McDonald, "Fredonian Rebellion," Handbook of Texas Online, accessed January 22, 2017, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/jcf01.

allied to the Norris-Sepulveda bloc and on whom they set a bounty for conspiring with Norris against the land claims of Anglo newcomers.[77] Gaines himself had fought for Mexican independence under Gutiérrez de Lara.[78] Edwards was almost immediately set loose, indicating his probable collusion in the affair.[79] A committee of five men representing the Ayish Bayou troop set about justifying their actions to the public and, presumably, the *Jefe Politico* and State government. "[D]isdaining to submit any longer to the oppression" of the local elites, the committee explicitly limited their grievances to the local government of Nacogdoches and simultaneously defended their willingness to find an adopted home in Mexico and amongst Mexicans – while simultaneously casting aspersions about the consistency of democracy in Mexico. The bizarre public statement attempted to justify an "impartial and deliberate trial" of Norris and Sepulveda, which Palmer's committee would officiate.[80] They also threatened to try Edwards, likely trying to obscure their collusion with him. The court, with Palmer presiding, charged both with a slew of crimes – corruption, extortion, forgery, possessing "a general character of notorious infamy," etc. – and found them "worthy of death."[81] The kangaroo court, however, merely stripped them both of titles and the right to hold office and installed John Durst, a relative newcomer to Nacogdoches, as *alcalde*.

The sudden turn of events shocked Nacogdoches and Texas as a whole. Perhaps fearful of reprisals from Adaeseños and their allies amongst the Anglo settlers and neighboring Native

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[77] Archie P. McDonald, "The Fredonia Rebellion," in *Modern City, 1779-1979,* ed. Archie P. McDonald, 33-39 (Burnet, Texas: Eakin Press, 1980), 36.
[78] David E. Narrett, "José Bernardo Gutiérrez De Lara: "Caudillo" of the Mexican Republic in Texas," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 106, no. 2 (2002), 2013. http://www.jstor.org/stable/30240342.
[79] Whether Edwards directly conspired with Palmer's junta is still technically unproven, though historians have accepted it as a likely fact since the mid twentieth century.
[80] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Bale Research Collection), Volume LXIII, 99-100.
[81] *Ibid*., 100-104.

Americans, the Ayish Bayou junta soon returned home. Meanwhile, Stephen F. Austin frantically tried to mediate the situation between the Edwards party and the Mexican government, urging the former to plead for leniency. Saucedo, on the other hand, left San Antonio de Béxar on December 13 accompanied by Lieutenant Colonel Mateo Ahumada and 130 soldiers.

Haden Edwards reacted to this news with his accustomed lack of judgement. On December 16th, the Edwards brothers and a handful of followers (including Martin Palmer), parading under a banner of red and white bearing the words, "Independence, Liberty, and Justice," declared Nacogdoches to be the capital of the new Republic of Fredonia. He spent the next few weeks establishing his headquarters in the Stone House and preparing to defend and expand his tiny Republic. Additionally, he forged an alliance with a disaffected Cherokee faction led by Richard Fields and John Dunn Hunter. These Cherokees were unhappy with the Mexican government's failure to grant them land titles. Their Declaration of Independence claimed all Mexican territory east of the Río Grande "as the contracting parties…may render Independent," made no mention of ethnic Mexicans, and opened with a bitter and hyperbolic diatribe against Mexico:

> "Whereas, the Government of the Mexican United States, have by repeated insults, treachery and oppression, reduced the White and Red emigrants from the United States of North America, now living in the Province of Texas, within the Territory of the said Government, into which they have been deluded by promises solemnly made, and most basely broken, to the dreadful alternative of either submitting to their freeborn necks to the yoke of an imbecile, faithless, and despotic government, mislabeled Republic; or of taking up arms in defense of their unalienable rights and asserting their independence."[82]

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[82] H.P.N. Gammel, *The Laws of Texas, 1822-1904, Volume I* (Austin: Gammel-Statesman Publishing Co., 1904), *109.*

From the beginning, the so-called Fredonia Rebellion proved disastrous. Less than twenty Cherokees joined the rebellion, and their numbers swiftly dwindled with desertions. Stephen F. Austin's San Felipe de Austin responded to the Edwards' invitation to join the Fredonia Rebellion by publically avowing their loyalty to Mexico, condemning the Fredonians, and by joining their militia to Saucedo's rain-delayed forces. Most surprisingly (to Edwards, at least), Anglos from Nacogdoches and its neighboring communities proved unwilling to fight for Haden Edwards. Peter Ellis Bean, an Anglo, Indian agent, and a commissioned colonel living in the area, wrote on December 28 to Stephen F. Austin that not only were there only thirty so-called Fredonians in Nacogdoches, but that Ayish Bayou had declared for the Mexican government, providing him with seventy men ready to fight the Fredonians on Saucedo's behalf.[83]

On January 4, Bean's loyalist forces, tired of waiting for the tardy Saucedo, began harassing the Fredonians.[84] Though Saucedo offered the rebels a pardon conditional on their surrender, the Fredonians did not budge. Instead they holed up in the Stone House while confiscating the property of those who refused to join their increasingly desperate cause. The Cherokees leadership under Chiefs Bowles and Big Mush killed Fields and Hunter when they attempted once more to rally support for Edwards. Dozens more Anglos, Native Americans, and Tejanos joined the loyalists under Bean. Finally, during the night of January 28, the few Fredonians remaining slipped from the Stone House and fled to Louisiana.

Saucedo and Austin arrived in Nacogdoches on February 8 to find a peaceful and secure town held by a surprisingly diverse loyalist presence. Saucedo, seeking to quell Edwards' efforts to raise an army in Louisiana, pardoned all involved in the insurgency save for the Edwards brothers, Martin Palmer, and Adolphus Sterne, an Anglicized German immigrant and a recent

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[83] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Bale Research Collection), Volume LXIII., 135-137
[84] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LXVIII, 106.

arrival from New Orleans, who had smuggled weapons from Louisiana for Edwards. Unlike the others, Sterne was a prisoner in the Stone Fort – where he quickly befriended the guards, charmed the Mexican authorities, and purportedly escaped his jail in order to attend a dance before returning the next morning, unforced, to his makeshift cell. Sterne was soon paroled due to his Masonic connections. Meanwhile, Sam Norris was reinstated as *alcalde* and Nacogdoches finally received a permanent military garrison under the command Colonel José de las Piedras.[85] The government redistributed the Edwards grant amongst *empresario*s Lorenzo de Zavala, David Burnet, and Joseph Vehlein. All three faced difficulties fulfilling their contract or managed it from a considerable distance, and sold their contracts to the New York-financed based Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company (which soon began running afoul of Mexican authorities). Most importantly, Nacogdoches finally received permission to form a full *ayuntamiento* government in June of 1827.[86] The *municipio* soon began to shrink as Anglo communities such as Ayish Bayou began establishing their own municipal governments.

The Fredonia Rebellion, though ultimately not much of a rebellion, looms large in the historiography of Texas as the first sign of conflict between Tejano and Anglo populations.[87] The Rebellion and events leading to it, particularly the statement made by Palmer's Ayish Bayou posse, certainly display early Anglo reservations about submitting to the Mexican government and the structure of Mexican democracy. These reservations would eventually become associated with Mexicans as a race rather than Mexico as a political entity, particularly in the 1830s and 1840s.[88] In the 1820s, however, many Anglo Americans still felt fondly toward what they referred to as the United States of Mexico (whereas contemporary Mexicans often referred to the

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[85] *Ibid*., 137-141.
[86] Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836*, 29.
[87] Crisp, "Anglo-Texan Attitudes toward the Mexican, 1821-1845," 70.
[88] *Ibid.,* 40-45, 200-232.

U.S.A. as the United States of the North), and perceived the politically powerful creole classes of Mexico as fellow European Americans.[89]

Yet the Adaeseños were not Castillian creoles or Béxareño Canary Islanders – they were mestizos, bearing the name of the Hispanicized native culture (Adaes Caddos) to whom the community traced much of its ancestry. More importantly, they maintained a solid grip on local government until Edwards managed to seize power. Accordingly, Edwards drew no support from the Tejano community, relying exclusively on discontent Anglo settlers for the votes that he used to deliver the office of *alcalde* to Chaplin and to impose his will on Nacogdoches by force. However, Edwards' supporters were ultimately outnumbered by members of the Anglo community of Nacogdoches and its vicinity who, instead of supporting supposed champions of their own ethnic community, allied themselves with Tejanos (and Native Americans) essentially in defense of the Mexican government – or, at least, in opposition to Edwards. The majority of Texas and Nacogdoches Anglos, even those in the outlying and often lawless settlements of East Texas, were willing to support and maintain their trust in the Mexican government. Their decision was rewarded. From the end of the Fredonia Rebellion to the beginnings of Texas' war for independence, Nacogdoches experienced rapid economic development, rarely interrupted peace, and relatively amicable relations between the town's Tejano and Anglo American communities.

[89] *Ibid.,*15.

2.3. Mier y Terán and Anglo Assimilation in Post-Fredonia Nacogdoches

Such a development would not have seemed imminent in the aftermath of the Fredonia revolt. In fact, the Mexican government was experiencing doubts as to their experiment with Anglo immigration following the debacle in Nacogdoches. The *Comisión de Límites* (Boundary Committee), a government organ tasked with maintaining, analyzing, and advising on policy concerning the Mexican-U.S. border, wanted to compose a report concerning the natural resources, geography, economics, and, most pressingly, the demographics of Texas. The Committee organized a party to do so, which left Mexico City on November 10, 1827. The leader of this expedition was General Manuel de Mier y Terán, the thirty-eight year-old head of Mexico's artillery school, veteran of the War for Independence, a former Congressman, and an accomplished engineer and mathematician with more than a passing interest in natural sciences. Accompanying him were lieutenant colonels José Bartres and Constantino Tarnava, draftsman and sublieutenant José María Sánchez y Tapia, naturalist Jean-Louis Berlandier, and mineralogist Rafael Chovell.[90] Mier y Terán, Sánchez y Tapia, and Berlandier kept journals during the expedition.

By the time they reached Béxar none had a favorable view of Texas' political situation. Sánchez y Tapia´s diary recorded suspicions and fears concerning the Anglicization of Texas and his contempt for most of the Anglos he encountered. He lambasted Texans in general as "fond of luxury, and the worst punishment that can be inflicted on them is work."[91] Mier y Terán compared the Anglos of Texas to the Comanches and other hostile peoples, calling them

[90] Mier y Terán, *Texas by Terán,* 3.
[91] *Ibid.,* 5, 20.

"invaders by another name."[92] The French-born and natural sciences-inclined Berlandier noticed that, "[Tejanos] cannot vie in any respect with those industrious colonists," who maintained a steep advantage in wealth and agricultural technology.[93]

On June 3rd, 1828, the party arrived in Nacogdoches, where they stayed for nearly eight months. Sánchez y Tapia was not impressed by Nacodochians of any ethnic heritage. He infamously dismissed the Adaeseños as Mexicans only by birth.[94] Furthermore, he despised the "ambitious" North Americans who had "taken possession of practically all the Eastern part of Texas, in most cases without the … permission of authorities."[95] He predicted that Mexico would soon lose Texas to the Anglos, lamenting of Mexico, "Alas, wretched Republic!"[96]

Mier y Terán likewise found Nacogdoches' racial dynamics troubling. The Anglo newcomers did not impress him: "a great number…are vicious and wild with evil ways," he declared, though there were some "longtime American residents whose conduct creates respect."[97] He found the Anglo dominance of commerce in Nacogdoches particularly troubling. Foreign-born Nacogdochians operated every town store.[98] Furthermore, foreigners (Anglos and French-descended Louisianans) dominated the fur trade. This trade, like that in mustangs, which had dominated the town less than a decade before, directed resources harvested by Native Americans into Anerican markets via Natchitoches. In a single year, as many as 1,200 otter pelts, 600 beaver pelts, 1,500 bear skins, and 80,000 deerskins flowed into and out of Nacogdoches on

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[92] *Ibid.,*31.
[93] *Ibid*., 17.
[94] José María Sánchez, "A Trip to Texas in 1828,"283.
[95] Mier y Terán, *Texas by Terán*, 20.
[96] *Ibid*., 20.
[97] *Ibid*., 79.
[98] *Ibid*., 110

their way to Louisiana.[99] Additionally, the Anglo population was ¨growing at an extraordinary rate," while the Tejano one remained relatively static.[100] In comparison, the Adaeseños held a distinct disadvantage in East Texas. Not only were the Anglos wealthier, but most Mexican Adaeseños were impoverished. Many inhabited simple earthen huts, or *jacales*, distant from the town center. Nacogdoches' Tejanos could not hope to compete economically with the Anglo newcomers. In fact, they believed the Mexican and Coahuiltejano governments had "pushed [them] aside for foreigners."[101] Adaeseños resented the prosperity and education they had first obtained in the United States and showed little interest in redistributing it to the Nacogdoches community. To retaliate, the Tejanos maintained a stranglehold on the recently granted *ayuntamiento* and its policies. Mier y Terán even accused local Tejanos of depriving foreign citizens of voting rights, though the actual citizenship of these Anglos is questionable.[102] The Anglos, in response, believed themselves unfairly persecuted and disdainful of their proud though poorer neighbors.

Yet the General displayed little sympathy for them. Like Sánchez y Tapia, Mier y Terán also found the Adaeseños wanting. He dismissed them as "ignorant mulattoes and Indians¨ of ¨the indigent and wretched class."[103] In fact, he saw little difference between them and the Anglos – "considered as rural men they are all the same," he stated, citing lack of education and refinement in both.[104] It is also worth noting that if Mier y Terán dismissed Adaeseños as insufficiently Castillian, the Anglo newcomers certainly did. Many Anglos came from the

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[99] *Ibid.,* 75, 101.
[100] *Ibid., 105.*
[101] *Ibid*., 98.
[102] *Ibid*., 98.
[103] *Ibid.,* 96, 103.
[104] *Ibid*., 80, 79.

American South, where slavery and violent Indian wars had only bolstered Anglo-American notions of racial supremacy.

Yet Mier y Terán found the economic gaps between the two ethnic communities far less worrying than the state of local government. "At the time of our revolution… in this part of Tejas every kind of public authority had disappeared," explained the General; nothing had changed in the following seven years.[105] This chaos not only encouraged the illegal immigration of Anglos, but also contributed directly to conflicts between the Tejano and Anglo communities. The absence of a competent political authority capable of monitoring immigrants and issuing them land titles had already contributed to the Fredonia insurrection, and promised continued divisions between Anglos and Adaeseños. The lately installed Mexican garrison was already going unpaid and seizing provisions from the Anglo merchants.[106] The young *ayuntamiento* had yet to prove itself supportive of Anglo interests. Such problems only encouraged Anglo newcomers to form their own ethnic enclaves instead of integrating into the once close-knit Nacogdoches community, as earlier Anglo immigrants had.

Mier y Terán recognized that the recent Fredonia insurrection both drew upon and encouraged the dirth of effective government.[107] He worried that, if the social divisions and ethnic animosity in East Texas remained unaddressed, such turmoil would return, and on a larger scale. He advised that a regional government with its own *Jefe Politico* (though subordinate to Béxar's) take office in Nacogdoches in order to oversee the distribution of public lands to Anglo colonists (as well as native peoples displaced by the U.S.) in an orderly manner. He further recommended that such a government receive financial support not from Coahuila y Tejas, but

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[105] *Ibid*., 95.
[106] *Ibid*., 110.
[107] *Ibid.,* 80.

from the federal government. He also hoped such a regional government could protect the rights of enslaved individuals, oversee the peaceful settlement of Native Americans fleeing the United States, and ensure economic prosperity to Anglos and Tejanos alike. He warned that the Anglos would otherwise continue to "lean toward rebellion and troublemaking."[108]

Mier y Terán's warning went largely unheeded. Nacogdoches had already been granted an *ayuntamiento* where the Anglo and Tejano ethnic communities could share government. No further steps were taken to address that community in particular. Instead, Mexico passed the law of April 6, 1830, which mostly followed other recommendations put forth by Mier y Terán, such as encouraging Mexican settlement in Texas, curtailing American colonization and *empresario* contracts (excepting the De León, Austin, and De Witt grants), and banning the introduction of new slaves to Mexico. Unfortunately, the law was in large part unenforceable due to a lack of human and material resources. This did not soothe Anglo indignation at the law. The central government appointed Mier y Terán, who himself had qualms about the feasibility of the law and already served as commandant general for Northeastern Mexico, as federal commissioner of colonization of Texas to enforce the legislation. Largely unsupported by the Coahuiltejano or federal governments, he floundered. Furthermore, he had quite likely suffered from clinical depression for years prior to his trip to Texas. As Mexico flitted in and out of civil war and Texas grew ever more restless, the workload wore at the General's already precarious physical and mental health. On the morning of July 3, 1832, Mier y Terán fell on his sword in front of a dilapidated church near Tampico. Sánchez y Tapia died two years later.[109]

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[108] *Ibid*., 100-101.
[109] *Ibid*., 181-187.

2.4. Economic and Civic Hierarchies in Nacogdoches Prior to 1832

Mier y Terán proved prophetic in his assessment of Texas. Restive Anglos would indeed begin resisting what little Mexican authority existed in Texas in the 1830s before eventually launching a successful bid for independence in 1836. He proved incorrect, however, concerning the dire situation of Nacogdoches. The General rightly believed that the source of Nacogdoches' wealth in the 1820's, furs and hides, was a swiftly dwindling resource controlled by far too few (Anglo) persons. He also believed that Tejanos would continue to exclude recently arrived Americans from the *ayuntamiento*. He anticipated neither an economic shift that would maintain the economic health of Nacogdoches nor the incorporation of the Anglo community into the civic life of Nacogdoches.

Cotton was already beginning to transform Texas, including Nacogdoches, by the time of Mier y Terán's visit. He remarked on the prosperity the cash crop brought to the one Anglo colony he showed approval for, San Felipe de Austin, noting in January of 1831 that one of the wealthiest men in San Felipe, an Anglo immigrant named Jim Groce, produced 600 bales of 500 pounds each, and shipped them by boat to Louisiana.[110] Yet he hardly mentions cotton when discussing Nacogdoches. Colonel de las Piedras, however, noted as early as 1827 that Anglo settlers shipped as much as 40,000 pounds of cotton to Louisiana – not the Mexican interior – each year.[111] Nacogdoches, along with Béxar and La Bahía, was a hub of the cotton industry, where farmers sold their already ginned and baled crop for export to the United States. And while other Anglo communities used rivers such as the Brazos to ship this precious cargo, Nacogdochians could rely on their accustomed route to Natchitoches.

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[110] *Ibid*., 144.
[111] Torget, *Seeds of Empire*, 122.

The cotton industry fueled a boom in land speculation. Between 1821 and 1836, more than 700 tracts of land under the jurisdiction of Nacogdoches' *ayuntamiento* exchanged hands through sales, deed transfers, and other legal means, not including land grants to immigrants. Most of those relinquishing land were Anglos, though Tejanos and Frenchmen were not uncommon. However, Anglos were almost exclusively the purchasers of land. In a sample of more than seven hundred transactions from 1821 to 1836, Tejanos sold or handed over land in around 37 percent of land transactions in Nacogdoches from, but only obtained land in approximately 15 percent of land transactions in that same time period.[112] Several Anglo individuals in particular, such as Adolphus Sterne, John Durst, and George Nixon, grew particularly wealthy through this exchange. Nixon's dealings are actually somewhat suspect; in the late 1820s, Nixon, acting through his power of attorney, repeatedly sold land to individuals who would then sell it back to him less than a month later; several of the clients whom he sold land for were Tejanos. The explanation for these actions is unknown. Overall, the physical structure of Nacogdoches was swiftly changing. As early as 1828, English was more common than Spanish in the *Plaza Principal*.[113]

Thanks to cotton and hides, Nacogdoches' trade across the Sabine was flourishing. The economic windfall benefited merchants in both ethnic communities. Between 1830 and 1834, borderlands merchants paid $832.7 in taxes to the *ayuntamiento*. $109 of this came from Tejano merchants, including Vicente Córdova. Though Anglos still dominated commerce, the Tejano community of Nacogdoches was finally beginning to regain some of their prosperity from before the War for Independence. Anglos also dominated another aspect of the *ayuntamiento*'s tax

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[112] Calculated from the Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), compiled from volumes I-IX.
[113] Mier y Terán, *Texas by Terán*, 194.

roles. Though Anglos were a minority as far as taxpayers went, they were an overwhelming majority of those owing unpaid taxes to the *ayuntamiento*.[114] Municipal records give no explanation for the discrepancy. Likely this is due to the messy immigration situation, persons frequently passing in and out of the *municipio*, the already noted disregard for *ayuntamiento* authority by many Anglos, or some combination thereof.

The economic structuring of Nacogdoches was not the only aspect of the town undergoing rapid shifts. Government itself was also changing in Nacogdoches. The new five-member *ayuntamiento* allowed the *municipio* government to better represent its population. Typically the body was split between between Adaeseños and Anglos, often favoring the former and including a Tejano *alcalde* as the body's head. The electorate's preference for Tejanos was clear. In an 1830 election featuring a very crowded and largely Tejano field, six Anglos managed to garner more than twenty votes. Twenty-one Adaeseños received more than twenty votes, including the highest vote-earners, Antonio Menchaca and Vital Flores, with 53 and 52 votes, respectively. This Tejano electoral dominance did not depend on the voter suppression alleged by Mier y Terán or the ineligibility of most Anglo voters. Instead, it originated with the shrinking of the *municipio* to Nacogdoches' traditionally Tejano heartland. Anglo enclaves such as Ayish Bayou (soon renamed San Augustine), Tenaha, and Liberty, once under Nacogdoches' purview, became independent municipalities with their own *ayuntamiento*s in the years following the General's visit.

Nacogdoches was not fully rid of its former, troublesome satellites, however. The local garrison maintained its jurisdiction over the entire eastern border of Texas, and the *ayuntamiento* of Nacogdoches faced pressure from it and the state legislature to aid in the enforcement of

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[114] *Ibid.,* XII, 5-9, 191-201.

federal border policies. Furthermore, the municipality's original border formed the basis for of the Department of Nacogdoches, a congressional district in the state legislature of Coahuila y Tejas, founded in 1834.[115] Nacogdoches had previously been part of the Department of Béxar. Despite its subordination to San Antonio prior to 1834, Nacogdoches was not politically insignificant. Only Adaeseño proved politically significant. Juan Antonio Padilla, a part-time resident of Nacogdoches, served as Secretary of State of Coahuila y Tejas from 1825 to 1828. He was arrested in 1830 for fraud and murder and temporarily stripped of his citizenship – likely a response to his Federalist and pro-Anglo politics. Accordingly, he was found not guilty and resumed his citizenship and his post as Secretary of State from 1834 into 1835.[116]

Padilla's support of Anglo immigrant interests reflected the attitudes of Nacogdoches' Tejano leaders. Despite the tendency of some Anglos not to pay their taxes in a timely manner, Adaeseños embraced Anglo commercialism and immigration for the sake of increasing the general prosperity of Nacogdoches, and even depended on their mercantile ties to the United States. In 1832, the Coahuila y Tejas legislature attempted to ban foreign retailers from selling their wares in the state unless by "bale or load" (favoring the cotton industry which Coahuila y Tejas was so heavily invested in). The Nacogdoches *ayuntamiento* – including *alcalde* Encarnación Chirino, Juan Mora, Antonio Menchaca, and, of all people, Adolphus Sterne, who had come in third in the election – wrote a scathing petition to the legislature in response. Not only was executing the act impossible according to the *ayuntamiento*, but to do so would prove "a serious and fatal injury to the village." As Nacogdochians, like most Texans, were cash poor

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[115] Richard Bruce Winders, *Crisis in the Southwest: The United States, Mexico, and the Struggle over Texas (*Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 2002), 15.
[116] Jesús F. de la Teja, "Padilla, Juan Antonio," Handbook of Texas Online, accessed February 13, 2017, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fpa06; Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), Volume LXII 30.

and held their wealth in land, "there is not one Mexican here able to buy at wholesale for cash any quantity of goods." More importantly, "there is not in this community one single person of Mexican birth, following mercantile business either by retail or wholesale, or who can command a sufficient capital to do so."[117] Considering Tejanos managed less than an eighth of the town's taxable trade, they were certainly correct. Nacogdoches was finally recuperating from its wartime devastation. Just as Texas' *frontera* defense and economy relied on Anglo settlers and their cotton, Nacogdoches relied on Anglo business for its own local economic health.

Several enterprising Tejanos even became involved with Anglo business endeavors. Members of leading Adaeseño families, such as Patheo Procella and one-time *alcalde* Patricio de Torres, became land surveyors assisting in the booming trade in land. Other Tejanos were buying their own slaves, replicating Anglo agricultural models despised in the rest of Mexico. In 1832, *alcalde* José María Mora even signed as a witness to the sale of an enslaved child despite the Mexican government's official disapproval of the institution.[118] Commercial ties were sometimes more direct. In 1829, a Tejano and an Anglo founded a meat market in the town's small commercial district.[119] Furthermore, the town's ethnic communities shared a newspaper during the period; Nacogdoches' *The Mexican Advocate* was printed in both English and Spanish.[120]

The Anglo inhabitants of Nacogdoches were themselves actively contributing to the civic community. With the rabble-rousing Edwards brothers gone and representation on the *ayuntamiento* and its subordinate bodies all but guaranteed, Anglo newcomers finally began integrating into Nacogdoches. Between 1828 and 1830, 112 individuals immigrating to Mexico

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[117] *Ibid*., XII, 311.
[118] David Lawrence Bill of Sale, 1832, Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.
[119] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), I, 226.
[120] Winnie Allen, "The History of Nacogdoches, 1691-1830," Masters thesis, The University of Texas at Austin (1925), 142.

took loyalty oaths before the Nacogdoches *ayuntamiento*. Of these, 110 were Anglos from the Unites States. As only male heads of household took the oaths, at least 121 other Anglos, mostly women and children, and 44 slaves entered Nacogdoches from the United States.[121] The census records reflect this immigration boom. Between 1824 and 1830, 162 foreigners entered Nacogdoches and accepted Mexican citizenship. Nearly all were Anglo-Americans, though French surnames were not entirely uncommon. Of these, 113 arrived in 1829 alone.[122] Among these newcomers was the son of Haden E. Edwards, Haden H. Edwards. Unlike his father, he did not antagonize the locals of either ethnic community, and in fact was on friendly terms with Nacogdoches Tejanos. In fact, Adaeseño voters propelled him to victory in an 1836 election to represent Nacogdoches in the Republic of Texas legislature.

Perhaps the best indicator of Tejano-Anglo cooperation appeared in the *Junta Piadosa*, or Board of Piety. The *ayuntamiento* delegated responsibilities to civic committees, responsibility for recommending and even funding policies and projects such as sanitation and education. The *Junta Piadosa* oversaw education and religion – though there was none of the former and little of the latter, as the state-sponsored Catholic Church had not maintained a building in Nacogdoches since 1801.[123] The board sought to amend this in the early 1830s. At this time it comprised four Tejanos (including its president) and three Anglos (including its vice-president). The board committed itself to the Church's upkeep as well as the founding of a school. By 1832, the *Junta* had managed to put together a ramshackle school servicing 29 children. Despite their minority position, however, the Anglos held disproportionate influence over the school. The teachers were

[121] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LXVII, 133-144.
[122] *Ibid*., XXX, 90-96.
[123] Partin, "A History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877," 144.

American immigrants and the language of instruction was English.[124] Spanish was not only absent in the classroom.

English was also used by the *ayuntamiento* for legal documents and in courtrooms where the parties concerned were Anglo – including the courtroom of recently appointed judge Vicente Córdova. The courts themselves were changing to suit Anglo customs. An Anglo-led push to allow trials by jury as opposed to the *alcalde* succeeded in Texas in 1834, though Tejanos as well supported the act as a limit on the power of elected officials.[125]

Despite the misgivings expressed by Mier y Terán in 1828, many Adaeseños welcomed Anglo immigrants in the early 1830s. In nine years, a town of six shabby and dilapidated buildings had become a thriving commercial hub. Some, however, maintained the General's pessimism on the subject. Colonel de las Piedras was the most vocal of these. Managing immigration along the Sabine was no easy task. Though many Anglo immigrants entered Nacogdoches in good standing with Mexican authorities, many more flouted the Mexican government in Texas and established themselves as squatters, though they often avoided Nacogdoches and Colonel de las Piedras in doing so. De las Piedras' attempts to enforce Mexican law and authority in East Texas soon led to the second clash between Anglo immigrants and Mexican authority in Nacogdoches – though, as with the Fredonia Rebellion, this conflict was not so simple as a clash between Mexican Texans and Anglo Texans.

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[124] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), XII, 236, 306.
[125] Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836,* 41.

Chapter 3: Rebellion, the Failure of Anglo Assimilation, and the Texas Revolution, 1832-1836

"*Siempre he conosido los habitantes Mejicanos obedientes a las leyes qe. los rigen…*"[126]

The year 1832 marks a turning point in history of Mexico, Texas, and Nacogdoches. Antonio López de Santa Anna assumed control of Mexico; Anglo Texans, and many Tejanos, declared themselves *Santanistas* and took arms against representatives of the Mexican regime in Texas; Nacogdoches experienced a second armed challenge to Mexican authority. Unlike the Fredonia Rebellion, the insurrection that culminated in the Battle of Nacogdoches in 1832 did not seek to create and independent state and included a sizable portion of the local population from both the Tejano and Anglo ethnic communities. It also, more or less, succeeded. For these reasons many scholars point to it as the first clash of what would become the Texas Revolution. This account, however, needs clarification. This narrative often frames the Battle of Nacogdoches as a conflict between Anglo colonists and Mexican troops, ignoring the role Adaeseños played in the conflict (though early Anglo accounts of the battle are also guilty of this and help to explain this historical interpretation). The rebels were not challenging Mexican government so much as expressing their discontent over particular forms of local administration. These concerns, however, soon developed into the motivating factors of Texian secession. It would be more accurate to say the Battle of Nacogdoches foreshadowed the Texas Revolution.

Life before and after the battle went on in Nacogdoches much the same after the battle as it had before. However, as immigrants poured into East Texas completely unchecked and Mexico

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[126] "Proclamation for Mexcican Militia," August 30, 1836, Nacogdoches Records Number II, Box 124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

once again spiraled into a civil war, the already precarious balance of power between Nacogdoches' Mexican and American communities began to teeter. Mutual self-interest could no longer sustain the cooperative atmosphere of the *municipio*. The Texas Revolution and the changes it wrought upended the social and political hierarchies in Nacogdoches. Assimilation gave way to thorough Anglicization. The Córdova Rebellion, a counterrevolution of sorts, failed to gain traction and ultimately allowed Anglos and excuse to further cement their hold on Nacogdoches. These three conflicts – the Battle of Nacogdoches, the Texas Revolution, and the Córdova Rebellion – ultimately transformed Nacogdoches from a diverse *frontera* town into an Anglo stronghold with a sizable Tejano community.

The utter failure of Anglo immigrants to assimilate into Mexican society contributed significantly to these developments in Texas. In many places, Anglos had formed their own isolated towns and settlements. This was not the case, however, in Béxar, La Bahía/Goliad, or Nacogdoches, where Anglos and Tejanos lived side by side. Prior to Texan independence, Tejanos still comprised the majority of each community's population. To a large degree, however, Anglos – motivated both by racism towards mestizo Mexican Texans and by cultural chauvinism – managed to isolate themselves within these towns, maintaining a distinctly American ethnic and cultural community. Though marriages, religious bonds (the naming of godparents, for one), business, and politics could bind the two ethnic communities together, Anglo Texans could only ever perceive themselves as Mexican citizens, not as Mexicans. By the mid 1830s, there was no need to integrate into Mexican society – Anglo Americans outnumbered Texas Mexicans in the region by at least five to one, 30,000 to 5,000. Such feelings of cultural separateness and superiority helped motivate the secession of Anglo-dominated Texas in 1836.

3.1. The Mexican Military Presence and the Battle of Nacogdoches

To say that Colonel José de las Piedras, the chief officer of Nacogdoches' garrison of federal troops, and the residents of Nacogdoches did not get along would be a gross understatement. For years he and his garrison had clashed with the *ayuntamiento* as well as private citizens. Nacogdochians resented his seizure of goods from local stores, as well as his perceived haughty demeanor. He, in turn, found their approach to law enforcement lackadaisical and their *ayuntamiento* uncooperative.

Colonel de las Piedras and his troops were entrusted with securing the Sabine and managing Anglo immigration (in addition to monitoring Native Americans beyond the jurisdiction of the Mexican government). He found the task impossible. The garrison of infantrymen and "indifferently mounted" dragoons could not patrol the entirety of the eastern borderlands. They were constantly undersupplied and underfinanced, going as long as eleven months without pay. De las Piedras personally had to pay for necessities such as horse feed, and his troops sometimes went without shoes.[127] The garrison therefore relied on trade with Natchitoches or on local, Anglo-run stores for food and supplies. Requisitioning supplies from local businesses did not always involve paying in full. This did not endear him to the Anglo community, which also resented his enforcement of immigration laws against their fellow Americans. De las Piedras did not trust the Adaeseños, either, saying, "the Mexican residents on whom I can depend are few."

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[127] Ambrocio de la , to the Commandant of the Troops at la Bahía, December 17, 1827; Ambrocio de la Garza to the Commandant of the Troops at la Bahía, March 4, 1828, Box 2D209, Ambrocio de la Garza Papers, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

He believed that the Tejanos dared not support him for fear of retaliation from their Anglo neighbors.[128]

Enforcing the border against illicit Anglo immigration proved impossible. "They enter by circuitous roads and settle wherever they please," lamented the colonel in 1828.[129] Unable to prevent crossings, de las Piedras attempted to enforce immigration law against squatters and enlisted the aid of an Anglo named J. Harrison to do so. Harrison fared no better. De las Piedras had sent Harrison in 1828 to ascertain the legal status of a troop of Anglos that had entered and occupied land in East Texas, and enforce the law if necessary, believing an Anglo would be better suited to the task of than a Mexican soldier. Instead, the squatters told Harrison "they [the squatters] do not believe that I [Harrison] have any authority…or you [de las Piedras] for giving the order [to settle elsewhere legally], and further they will do as they please, and settle where they please."[130]

Enforcing immigration law even proved difficult in Nacogdoches itself. In 1829, nine families of Anglo immigrants entered Nacogdoches, where de las Piedras demanded their documentation. The Americans claimed that their passports for settling at one of the inland *empresario* colonies were en route, and de las Piedras ordered them to remain at a nearby ranch until the papers arrived. Before long, the immigrants slipped away into the Texan interior. This incident, more than any other, displayed the garrison's ineffectiveness. It also reinforced de las Piedras' negative opinion of Anglo immigrants. "Drunkards, thieves and vagrants are flocking here," stated the colonel.[131] Though his garrison doubled in size in 1830 (likely to help enforce the law of April 6th), de las Piedras still found his task nigh impossible. In fact, the larger

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[128] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), XII, 119-122.
[129] *Ibid*., XII, 175.
[130] *Ibid*., XII, 36-37.
[131] *Ibid*. ,XII, 175.

numbers likely only increased the Colonel's burden and strained his relationship with the locals further. The only locals he seemed on good terms with were several Native American peoples inhabiting Texas at the time, several of which had been displaced from the United States.

The Anglos themselves found de las Piedras personally distasteful. The most bombastic of complaint against him came from Anglo Nacogdochian Thomas McKinney, who wrote to the *Jefe Politico* in September 1828 that the Colonel displayed a "cold despotism." McKinney accused the Colonel of jailing and even expelling from the *municipio* individuals without the knowledge of the *alcalde*, appropriating private goods (and refusing to reimburse without a certificate signed by a man he had exiled to the United States), cattle theft, unpaid debts, and allowing his troops too much leeway in the town. McKinney believed de las Piedras to be a *caudillo* (local strongman) in the making. There was no check on the garrison. The *ayuntamiento* was "wanting in instruction" from the state and federal governments, and the *alcalde*, Juan Mora, was "fearful" of the Colonel and his troops.[132]

De las Piedras did not have a cordial relationship with the *ayuntamiento* itself. He believed them to prioritize the interests of Anglo immigrants over the enforcement of state and federal law, an accusation of some merit. The *ayuntamiento* turned a blind eye to illegal border crossings, increasingly used English for official documentation, and had also begun the practice of recording new citizens as belonging to the Christian religion rather than the legally mandated Catholic denomination.[133] This was a serious offense: the federal Constitution stipulated that "the nation protects it [the Roman Catholic Church] by just and wise laws, and prohibits the exercise

[132] *Ibid*., XII, 57-59.
[133] *Ibid*., XII, 90-96.

of every other [faith]."[134] In 1830 de las Piedras went so far as to call the *alcalde*, Vicente Córdova, a criminal:

> "The Alcalde and Ayuntamiento have not the least desire to comply with their duties…Laws or Decrees are never published here…[they are] made to remain hidden in the archives of Nacogdoches, where no one…sees them; and the people of the country are thus left in ignorance of their duties."[135]

By his own assessment, de las Piedras lacked the resources to secure the border without local assistance. Adaeseños, however, recognized that the increasing prosperity of their town depended on Anglo immigration. Furthermore, like most Tejanos, Adaeseños (or at least their leadership) were committed liberal Federalists, long disillusioned by the inability of Mexico City or even the state government in Saltillo or Monclova to address Texan concerns. Federal troops were not only a nuisance and inconvenience, but useless. De las Piedras was himself a conservative Centralist, but he could sympathize at times with local political concerns. He even understood the stubborn federalism of the Adaeseños. When writing to a superior concerning legislation abolishing slavery in 1829, he stated, "I am tired of repeating, [Nacogdochians] are disaffected toward the government." Such disaffection, coupled with the abolition of slavery, portended disaster in the colonel's opinion. "Foreigners and even Mexicans …declared that a revolution would result, if the law is enforced." Such a bill "reduces them to poverty," he explained. He could not – or dared not – enforce the law given his scant resources. Tacitly, he supported the *ayuntamiento*'s lack of enforcement and its delayed announcement and acknowledgement of the law. His statement, along with similar petitions from Texas' Tejano and

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[134] Gammel, *Laws of Texas,* 61.
[135] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), XII, 175-176.

Anglo leaders, eventually convinced the state government to grant Texas a reprieve from the legislation.[136]

Crisis averted, de las Piedras returned to maintaining his impoverished garrison and grumbling to his superiors. He even bought land in the community, perhaps thinking to settle permanently. But the revolution he feared was only delayed, not averted. The first sign of trouble came from Anahuac, far to Nacogdoches' south along the coast but more or less within de las Piedras' purview. The head of Anahuac's garrison, the American-born Colonel Juan (born John) Bradburn, was a veteran of the Mexican War of Independence, fully assimilated into Mexican society, and far more aggressive than de las Piedras. Charged with enforcing the long-unenforced customs duties on trade between Texas and the United States and also with cracking down on the rampant smuggling in East Texas, Bradburn – and his troops, mostly unruly, conscripted convicts – swiftly wore their welcome thin in Anglo-American Anahuac. A dispute over escaped slaves from Louisiana devolved into a hostage crisis and fatal firefights. Among the hostages was a recent arrival from Alabama, William Barrett Travis, a ringleader amongst the anti-Bradburn (and increasingly anti-Mexico) faction. Horrified, de las Piedras set out on June 19, 1832 from Nacogdoches to peacefully resolve the matter.[137]

After meeting with both factions, de las Piedras negotiated an end to the stand off. Bradburn released Travis and his co-conspirators and allowed the (local Anglo-dominated) civil courts to handle their actions, while he himself resigned his command over the garrison and left Anahuac. The authors of the settler demands, which de las Piedras acquiesced to on June 29, 1832, included Gavino Aranjo, Juan Lazarín, Frank W. Thompson, James Lindsay, Randall Jones, and

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[136] *Ibid*., XII, 178-181.
[137] H.W. Brands, *Lonestar Nation* (New York: Anchor Books, A Division of Random House, Inc., 2005), 164-167.

George Pollitt (Pollitt would become *alcalde* of Nacogdoches during the Texas Revolution). [138] Colonel de las Piedras returned to Nacogdoches feeling none the better. He feared future trouble amongst East Texas' rowdy and ever-growing Anglo American settlements. Therefore, upon returning to Nacogdoches, Colonel de las Piedras ordered the citizenry to turn over their personal weapons to the garrison. In doing so, he unwittingly set off the very civil conflict he had hoped to prevent. The Anglo and Tejano residents of East Texas relied on firearms both for food and for protection. Every community had their own militia to defend against outlaws and hostile Native Americans. Nacogdoches had two, one Anglo and Mexican. The Adaeseño militia, headed at the time by former *alcalde* Vicente Córdova, followed the mounted *compañía volante* (flying squadron) model of Tejano militias. The political setting of the order was likewise suspicious. Fighting between the conservative Centralist and liberal Federalist faction, the latter headed by Antonio López de Santa Anna, had once again ignited in the Mexican interior. Though the conflict had left Texas untouched thus far, Mexican authority officially represented a Centralist regime, whereas most Tejanos and the vast majority of Anglos favored the Federalists.

The Nacogdoches *ayuntamiento* immediately began to challenge de las Piedras. A statement issued on July 28, 1832, accused the colonel of threatening the "lives, interests and peace" of East Texas with his "unconstitutional wishes." The *ayuntamiento* also took umbrage with de las Peidras' blatant contempt for Anglos: "Americans and Indians are by him held in the same estimation, and as colonists on the same footing;" de las Piedras had employed Native Americans as auxiliaries in the past, including during the recent Anahuac kerfuffle. In response to the disarmament, the *ayuntamiento* declared "we will risk our lives and freedom," and called specifically on the neighboring Anglo community of Ayish Bayou to assist with their effort to

[138] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), XII, 312.

oust de las Piedras. The boldest statement made by the *ayuntamiento*, however, was an outright declaration in favor of Santa Anna and Federalism. Thus the municipal government legitimized their stance against the Centralist de las Piedras and pledged allegiance to the faction most amenable to their own interests and seemingly most likely to emerge victorious from the conflict in Mexico's interior. The *ayuntamiento* consisted at this time of Juan Mora, Antonio Menchaca, Charles S. Taylor, Augustus Hotchkiss, and *alcalde* Encarnacion Chirino. All five signed the resolution. Their manifesto against de las Piedras was written in English.[139]

Ayish Bayou, and the other Anglo settlements of East Texas, responded to the Nacogdoches *ayuntamiento* with gusto. Ayish Bayou, Neches, Shelby, and various other settlements all supplied militiamen. The Anglos elected James W. Bullock as their commanding officer on Pine Hill, east of Nacogdoches. Meanwhile, de las Piedras fortified Nacogdoches against an attack even as local merchants retreated from the town, taking their goods with them. On August 2nd Bullock issued de las Piedras an ultimatum: declare for Santa Anna, the Federalist 1824 Constitution, and the local civil authorities or face an attack in four hours time.

The militia forces numbered, according to Anglo militiaman W. Burton (likely Isaac W. Burton), 239 persons. Included in these "citizens of Texas, both Mexicans and Americans" were a "company of Mexicans" from Nacogdoches headed by an individual identified on as Córdova. Undoubtedly, this is Nacogdoches militia captain Vicente Córdova.[140] *Alcalde* Encarnacion Chirino had also joined the militia. As with the Fredonia Rebellion, Tejano and Anglo forces

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[139] *Ibid*., LXVII 183-184.

[140] The 20th century histories of Nacogdoches produced by Robert Bruce Blake, James Gallaway Partin, Winnie Allen, and others make no mention of this fact.

stood arrayed alongside each other – save this time the opponent was not a ragtag band of Anglo and Cherokee malcontents, but at least 350 Mexican troops.[141]

De las Piedras did not surrender. Fighting commenced the afternoon of August 2, and the Texan militiamen, Tejano and Anglo, captured several buildings, including the old Ybarbo Stone House. Furthermore, the rebels had sustained few casualties, whereas the garrison had lost at least twenty men, including a captain and two sergeants.[142] Fighting ceased with nightfall, and de las Piedras – uncertain as to the firmness of his soldiers' loyalty, and afraid of becoming entrapped – evacuated his troops from the town square under the cover of darkness. The rebels pursued the soldiers the next morning until de las Piedras took refuge at the home of Anglo planter John Durst, where his troops turned against him and forced him to ask for terms. After the Mexican soldiers were led back to Nacogdoches, Asa M. Edwards escorted de las Piedras to Stephen F. Austin in San Felipe, where he was paroled and allowed to return to Mexico. Recent immigrant James Bowie marched de las Piedras' troops to San Antonio. The losses in this soon-dubbed Battle of Nacogdoches were lopsided: the garrison suffered approximately forty deaths and another forty or so wounded, while the Texan rebels suffered three killed and as many as seven wounded, though one of these later died of his injury. Amongst the Texan dead was Tejano *alcalde* Encarnacion Chirino. De las Piedras himself went to join his family in Matamoros. He continued to serve in Mexico's military as a Centralist; he died in battle at Tampico in April of 1839 during a renewed Federalist-Centralist civil war.[143]

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[141] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LXIII, 50.
[142] Partin, "A History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877," 166.
[143] Robert Bruce Blake, "Piedras, Jose De Las," Handbook of Texas Online, accessed March 05, 2017, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fpi07.

Bowie proudly declared his approval of the Adaeseños, who, "induced by certain American arguments to declare in favor of the Constitution," had shown their mettle in the fight.[144] Any response to this from Nacogdoches' Tejanos no longer survives, though it is safe to say they knew a great deal more about their constitution than James Bowie. But Bowie's statement reflects a growing tendency amongst Texas Anglos, particularly the more recent arrivals, to ascribe the political and civic virtues of Texas Mexicans to American ideologies rather than the democratic traditions and ideals of Mexico in general or Tejanos in particular. The Anglos were (only somewhat unconsciously) already beginning to divide Tejanos into two camps. One, mostly well educated, landed, and often claiming a largely European heritage, could be counted on as friends and allies – perhaps as fellow Texans, or even, someday, Americans. The other camp, often poorer and decidedly less white in its heritage, was less susceptible to American notions of democracy and propriety; they were doomed, in the eyes of culturally chauvinistic and often racist Anglos, to never be anything more than Mexicans. Such feelings had long been fomenting in Texas. The Texas Revolution would soon bring them to the fore.

However, the citizens of East Texas were less concerned with such prejudices than they were with preventing retaliatory measures from the state or federal governments. They needed to avoid a full-blown revolution. The Anglos supposed they had done a public service in disposing of de las Piedras. "We had done," said Isaac Burton, "the Mexican nation a service for which we should in doe [*sic*] time be rewarded."[145] The *ayuntamiento* – what remained of it – wrote to the political and military hierarchs in Béxar commending de las Piedras' conduct in the fear but expressed their fears of military dominance of civilians; they asked that any future garrisons not be stationed in Nacogdoches itself. "We are all Mexicans and Mexican citizens," they

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[144] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LXIII, 6.
[145] *Ibid*., LXV, 186.

asserted.[146] Fortunately for them, Santa Anna's Federalist faction soon secured its hold over Mexico and the Texan rebels went unpunished. In fact, they were rewarded, just as Burton had anticipated. The Nacogdoches garrison was not reconfigured and redeployed. In fact, in light of the events at Nacogdoches and Anahuac, the federal military withdrew entirely from East Texas. This allowed Texan rebels and, in time, secessionists to rally and organize unimpeded in 1835 and 1836.

3.2. Juan N. Almonte and Anglicization in the Prelude to the Texas Revolution

Even though Santa Anna's ostensibly Federalist government now controlled Mexico, recent events in Texas – the Battle of Nacogdoches, the arrest of Stephen F. Austin over his advocacy fro Texan statehood, the still unchecked immigration of Anglos – prompted Mexico City to revisit Mier y Terán's analysis of Texas. Again, Mexico City chose a military man, Colonel Juan Nepomuceno Almonte, to examine these issues. He was the illegitimate son of a martyred hero of the Mexican war of independence, had lived for a time in American New Orleans, and served the Mexican republic as a soldier, diplomat, and statesman. Almonte received his commission to investigate and report on Texas in January of 1834.[147]

Like his predecessor Mier y Terán, he found much to worry him in Texas. His confidential orders, hidden behind a public charge to assuage colonial Anglo concerns over Texan statehood and Austin's imprisonment ("it is believed he will be pardoned and will return to the benefits of a peaceful citizen"), were to make a topographical assessment of Texas for the sake of Mexican colonization, treat with Native American peoples, ascertain U.S. interests in Texas, to inform

[146] *Ibid*., 71-78.
[147] Almonte, *Almonte's Texas,* 11-21.

slaves of their freedom, and, most importantly, "to find out whether…there are adherents of independence for that department and others who desire always to be united with Mexico."[148] Almonte first traveled to the United States, where he gaged America's disposition to Texas and Mexico ("there is no hostile view on the part of the government of this Republic against our own") before crossing the Sabine into Texas.[149] He entered Nacogdoches on April 26, 1834, and remained for two months. In Nacogdoches, he wrote to his superiors concerning the suspect nature of the local land speculators and their allies, including the recent immigrant Sam Houston. But overall he found Nacogdochians, Tejanos and Anglos, harmless – "I have found among the colonists a better disposition [to Mexico and its government] than expected," he remarked.[150] It should be noted that Almonte was a Federalist, and likely approved of de las Piedras' ouster. He certainly did not approve, however, of the expulsion of the entire garrison. Nacogdoches was the key, he believed, to securing Texas from possible enemies both within and without its borders:

> "In a word, what is of interest and necessity for now is to have here in Nacogdoches any garrison, no matter how insignificant it may seem, not so much to maintain order among the colonist of this department – who are loyal to Mexico – [but] to prevent as much as possible any revolutionary combination that the colonies of the center will attempt with those of the border in the future. The frontier is now totally abandoned…the civil authorities in this town have no more support than what some citizens benevolently wish to lend them. All who have something to lose are anxious for troops, and thus there is a great receptivity to them."[151]

The accuracy of Almonte's last sentence is suspect given the events of 1832. Though Almonte despised the "devious" de las Piedras and writes favorably of the East Texans who fought him, he seems to be under the impression that de las Piedras' former troops left their post

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[148] Ibid., 39.
[149] *Ibid*., 95.
[150] *Ibid*., 103.
[151] *Ibid*., 103.

voluntarily.[152] His favorable opinion of Nacogdoches' Anglos – particularly given what little regard he has for the interior colonies, including and in particular Austin's colony, so admired by Mier y Terán – is astonishing. Almonte was very worried of Texas' future. "The Anglo American settlers act out of self-interest and not out of patriotism [to Mexico]," he lamented, though his comments targeted the inhabitants of the Department of the Brazos in particular. He feared this self-interest could lead to a revolt if the colonists lost faith in the Mexican government – or their fear of it.[153] In fact, his notion of an "insignificant" garrison constituted one thousand troops. But he was willing to entrust Nacogdoches with the future of Mexican Texas. What is most astonishing about this is that Nacogdoches was, by this time and by Almonte's own reckoning, mostly Anglo. He estimated the ethnic Mexican population at 500, and he gave the same number for the town's jurisdiction; but, when factoring in the populations of various satellite settlements in the immediate vicinity, Almonte estimated the population of what could perhaps be called greater Nacogdoches as approximately 3,500. He gave the population of the Department of Nacogdoches as 9,000.[154]

Almonte's plans for Nacogdoches stemmed from the conduct of its inhabitants and its economic significance. He was not, however, lacking in criticisms. Almonte abhorred the Anglicization of East Texas, particularly the practice of Southern chattel slavery, and that "almost nothing but English is spoken in that part of the Republic" (he found the usage of English in the Department's three primary schools, including Nacogdoches,' less than ideal).[155] He placed his hopes for the region's development in "families of good decency and ample culture [that] have begun to settle in Texas, especially in Nacogdoches," whom he believed

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[152] *Ibid*., 108.
[153] *Ibid*., 135.
[154] *Ibid*., 253-255.
[155] *Ibid*., 256.

would appreciate Mexican governance and strengthen the local economy.[156] Almonte recognized the significance of the Department's economy – and its ties to the United States. He estimated annual trade with the U.S. to reach 470,000 pesos, including two thousand bales of cotton at 450 pounds each, 90 thousand pelts, and 5,000 head of livestock. Such trade could reach the United States via *el Camino Real* or the Neches River, which was navigable within 39 miles to Nacogdoches' south.[157]

The difference between Almonte's assessment and Mier y Terán's is remarkable. The cause of this difference lies in the nature of the communities these two men visited; Nacogdoches had changed dramatically since 1828. The economic and political opportunities of both Anglos and Tejanos seemed brighter in 1834. Their town was larger and more prosperous, and the conflict with de las Piedras had unified the town's inhabitants far more than the repulsing of Edward's band had. This phenomenon was not limited to Nacogdoches. The towns of Texas were more or less left to themselves in the early 1830s, enjoying the benign neglect of a distant, friendly, Federalist government. Nacogdoches – and Texas in general – was enjoying a brief halcyon.

This halcyon both coincided with and quickened pace of Anglicization, and depended on ties to the U.S. that Anglicization strengthened. American immigrants were swiftly approaching the status of the town's majority population. They continued to gobble up land in the community, cementing their economic power as an ethnic community. Their political power also increased: Anglo interests had always been well represented on the *ayuntamiento*, but now they dominated. Noted troublemaker Adolphus Sterne tested the limits of his parole by assisting those who fought de las Piedras, and repeatedly served in the municipal government, representing the interests of those Anglos least disposed toward Mexican government. He even served a term as *alcalde*.

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[156] *Ibid*., 257.
[157] *Ibid*., 256-259.

Increasingly, the government's documents appeared in English; court cases, land sales, legal documents, *etcetera*. By 1835 Spanish had all but disappeared from the legal proceedings of Nacogdoches. In one court case from 1836, a civil suit between an Anglo and a French-surnamed Nacogdochian, the only court documents in Spanish were the most perfunctory of legal papers, and most of these had an English equivalent, despite the fact that the *municipio* Primary Judge overseeing the entire appeal was an Adaeseño, Juan Mora.[158]

Religion, too, was Anglicizing. Catholicism was the state religion; all citizens were required to be, at least publically, Catholics. Entrance certificates, however, began obfuscating the matter in the early 1830s by referring to many undoubtedly Protestant immigrants as members of the "Christian religion" rather than the Catholic Church. Furthermore, Protestant denominations and clergy flourished in the town, though they never flouted Mexican government so much as to make public displays of their religious nonconformance. These religious shifts came to a head in October of 1834. While travelling with an Anglo companion, Nacogdoches' Franciscan pastor suffered a pistol shot and died of the wound. Though suspicions of murder abounded, particularly in the Tejano community, the official report on the death – produced by an Anglo commission six months later – ruled the death a suicide.[159] Nacogdoches' Catholic community was left rudderless even as Texas and Mexico's brief period of peace ended, and renewed civil strife threatened to rip the Tejano and Anglo ethnic communities of Nacogdoches apart.

Scholars treat the years between the Battle of Nacogdoches and the Texas Revolution paradoxically. James Gallaway Partin stated that the Battle of Nacogdoches both marked the end

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[158] "J.T. Mason vs. J.C. lepliche r: Free State of Coahuila y Tejas District of Nacogdoches 1836 – Civil Suit under the Mexican System," Court Cases: 1835-1859, Box 3G301, Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection, The Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

[159] De la Teja, *Tejano Leadership in Mexican and Revolutionary Texas,* 83-84.

of Mexican rule in Nacogdoches and that, "curiously," Anglos and Tejanos coexisted surprisingly well after the battle, even within the *ayuntamiento*.[160] It is perhaps more accurate to say that the battle marked the beginning of the end both of Mexican governance and peaceful Adaeseño-Anglo coexistence. Only two more Tejanos – Ignacio Ybarbo and Vital Flores – served as *alcalde* after the death of Encarnacion Chirino. Furthermore, Tejanos no longer represented Nacogdoches in the affairs of Texas. When the Anglo communities of Central Texas called for assemblies of delegates to address their grievances against the state and federal governments in 1833 and 1834, Nacogdoches' representatives were all Anglos. While the day-to-day coexistence of the *municipio*'s Mexican and Anglo ethnic communities was relatively unchanged, Anglos had begun to assert themselves as Nacogdoches' political authority. The only social spheres still under Tejano control were purely local functions. Tejano families still sponsored the community dances so enjoyed by Anglos and Adaeseños alike, and the Stone House – operating as the town's seat of government and courthouse – was owned by Juan Mora and Vicente Córdova, who had purchased it in 1834.[161] In all other respects – economic prosperity, political power, social standing – the benefits reaped by Nacogdoches' ethnic Mexicans, and by Tejano populations elsewhere in Texas, had plateaued. Anglos were now too numerous and too prosperous to effectively compete with. The place of Adaeseños in Texas was becoming increasingly small; that of their Anglo neighbors was steadily increasing.

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[160] Partin, "A History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877," 158, 170.
[161] Archie P. McDonald, "Old Stone Fort," Handbook of Texas Online, accessed March 07, 2017, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/cco03; Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), XII, 211-212.

3.3. Anglo Participation and Adaeseño Neutrality in the Texas Revolution

This Anglicization, paired with renewed political instability in Mexico, soon produced the very revolution feared by Mier y Terán and Almonte. By 1835, the governments of Coahuila y Tejas and the Mexican Republic descended into chaos and violence over a Constitutional crisis precipitated by President Antonio López de Santa Anna. Though he had assumed the office as a Federalist, he had reoriented himself into the Centralist camp and reconfigured the Mexican Constitution to reflect this change beginning in 1834. Conveniently, the Centralist party supported a strong federal government and a potent presidency. Several states challenged Santa Anna's attempts to consolidate power, among them Coahuila y Tejas, though the state itself was divided. A Centralist camp based out of Saltillo and a Federalist faction centered in Monclova had competed over the state since the 1820s. The state's capital often depended on the party in power. Governor Augustín Viesca, a Federalist, found himself running a state swiftly unraveling along political and ethnic lines. All the while, the Centralist General Martín Perfecto de Cos threatened to impose Centralist governance on the state – including largely demilitarized Texas. Anticipating that violent conflict would erupt between political factions in Coahuila, and between the state and federal governments, Viesca called for the staunchly Federalist towns of Texas to send militiamen to Monclova.

Nacogdoches, like most Texan towns, did not send any men to Monclova. The town was not only far removed from the capital, but struggling to determine how it should conduct itself in the midst of political turmoil. Nacogdochians' political disagreements ran along ethnic lines more so than at any prior point in their history. Nacogdoches Anglos, like most Texas Anglos, had been increasingly restive over the last few years. Various conventions had brought together Texas'

Anglo communities to organize their responses to perceived problems with Mexican governance, and Nacogdochians had been present at all of them. The Adaeseño community displayed no interest in being involved with these conventions. They held more trust in Mexican government and political processes that their Anglo American neighbors.

But the ascent of the Centralists and Santa Anna's turn towards authoritarianism had exacerbated these differences. Anglos increasingly favored drastic, violent resistance to Santa Anna. Several of the most radical Anglo leaders – including Sam Houston, Thomas Jefferson Rusk, and Robert Potter – inhabited Nacogdoches. Increasingly, Anglos favored constructing a Texan government to oppose Santa Anna. Whether this government would operate as a state government independent of divided Coahuila y Tejas but still part of the Mexican federation, as many Anglos and Tejanos had long pushed for, or as an independent republic, as an increasing number of very vocal Anglos (many of them very recent arrivals) desired, remained a heatedly debated subject. Tejanos, on the other hand, were more cautious. This opinion was not limited to Adaeseños. Juan Seguín wrote to Thomas Rusk that most Béxareños favored neutrality in the imminent conflict between Texan Federalists and Santa Anna, and that many families had fled to the comparative safety of the thoroughly Mexican settlements along the Río Grande.[162] Whereas their Anglo neighbors still identified heavily with the United States, Tejanos shared a cultural and political heritage with their fellow ethnic Mexicans. The distinct identities of Tejano communities were interconnected with a young but potent sense of Mexican identity, which most Anglos simply didn't share or have any interest in adopting. Furthermore, the Mexican communities of Texas – especially Nacogdoches – recalled the devastation visited on Texas

[162]Juan N. Seguín, *A Revolution Remembered: The Memoirs and Selected Correspondence of Juan N. Seguín, e*dited by and Jesús F. de la Teja (Austin, Texas: Texas State Historical Association, 2002),141.

during the Mexican war of independence. Anglos had no such memories, and did not fear or anticipate the dire consequences a Revolution could entail.

Political division between the two ethnic communities predated the ascent of a Centralist regime. As Texan Anglos began taking steps to organize a separate Texan government in the 1830s, Nacogdoches' Tejano leadership attempted to prevent Nacogdoches from becoming involved in the proceedings. The first meeting of Anglo representatives in San Felipe in October of 1832 drew little attention from the Nacogdoches *ayuntamiento*. At least two Nacogdochians – Thomas Hastings and Charles S. Taylor – attended that meeting.[163] Yet when Hastings called for a public election in March of 1833 for delegates to a second convention in April, *alcalde* José Ignacio Ybarbo attempted to prevent Nacogdoches from becoming implicated in Anglo Texan unruliness. Ordered by *Jefe Politico* Ramón Musquíz to prevent the election (Musquíz was a Federalist and generally supportive of Anglo interests, but extra-legal conventions like those in San Felipe were a bridge too far for the legalistic and patriotic statesman), Ybarbo removed notices for the election himself and demanded the militia prevent the election from occurring. Ybarbo, however, was all but alone in his position. *Alcalde* Ybarbo's *ayuntamiento* provided no support, and neither did the militia. A severe storm prevented the militia from enforcing the *alcalde* and *Jefe Politico*'s wishes – but not the election from proceeding. Ybarbo was apoplectic. He railed to Musquíz that he could not be "expected to preserve order in this place, and at the same time utterly without such military force as can be relied on to that end." "The inhabitants unite to accomplish their purpose," he warned, "steps preparatory to the secession of Texas."[164]

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[163] Partin, "History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas," 180.
[164] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LXVII, 15.

By 1835, the situation in Texas had grown direr. The Coahuila y Tejas legislature disbanded in April, as did the state militia, and Governor Viesca was arrested while unsuccessfully attempting to relocate the state government to Béxar. The Anglo radicals grew more powerful in Texas as it became clear that armed resistance to Santa Anna was imminent. Texas' Anglo communities had organized a provisional government of sorts out of their community conventions. This council did not attempt to declare Texas independent of Mexico, but it did publically state that "Texas is no longer morally or civilly bound by the compact of Union" – that is, the 1824 Constitution violated by Santa Anna.[165] Martin Parmer, the former Fredonian, represented Tenaha on this council.[166]

In Nacogdoches, the rebel faction coalesced as the Committee of Vigilance and Safety. Multiple committees of this sort sprouted across Anglo Texas in 1835. Though extralegal, they assumed a great deal of influence and authority, going so far as to threaten the property of uncooperative persons.[167] Nacogdoches' Tejanos were shocked. Antonio Menchaca, *Procurador* on the *ayuntamiento*, wrote to Viesca's Centralist successor that "the Mexican citizens who love their Country" were under threat from Anglos who desired to "disarm all the Mexicans so that they cannot help defend the Government."[168]

The Adaeseño militia, still under the command of Vicente Córdova, likewise found itself at odds with the Committee. Toward the end of August, less than two months before the Battle of Gonzales initiated the Texas Revolution, Córdova wrote an address to his militiamen that called for the maintenance of law, the protection of public order, and respect for the rightful authorities:

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[165] *Texean and Emigrants Guide*, Nacogdoches, November 28, 1835.
[166] *Ibid*.
[167] Paul D. Lack, "The Córdova Revolt." In *Tejano Journey, 1770-1850,* edited by Gerald E. Poyo, 89-109 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 91.
[168] "Antonio Menchaca to the Governor of the State," Aug. 23, 1835, Béxar Achives, quoted in Lack, "The Córdova Revolt,"91.

> *"…vosotros haveis [sic] obedecido siempre las ordenes de ses autoridades…se halla todo cuidadano de prestar sus servicios a las autoridades, para el sostenimiento de las leyes que nos rigen, y seguidamente el desus personas. La autoridad de este suelo, (para meso decir) de esta villa, se guesa de la falta del sostenimiento, para el desempeno desus deberes, originandose de tal falta, que muchas veses y llega el grado de infringir nuestras leyes…"*[169]
>
> "You all have always obeyed the orders of the authorities…one finds all citizens lending their services to the authorities for the sustaining of the laws that govern us and thereby sustaining our people. The authority of this soil, (so to speak) of this town, is sure of the lack of support for the performance of your duties, originating from such a fault, that many times comes to the extent of the infringement of our laws …"

In his speech, Córdova constantly repeats a similar refrain of obedience, authority, and loyalty – but he never specifies which authority it is his militiamen must be loyal too. Whether this is a subtle statement of personal Centralist conservatism, a call for loyalty to the immediate Nacogdoches community, or simply a means of hedging bets is unclear.[170] Either way, he disbanded the militia on November 10. The Battle of Gonzales had occurred on October 2, igniting an armed conflict between Texan militias and the Mexican government.

Despite the neutrality of the Adaeseños, the majority of the town's population excluding its various suburbs and satellites, Nacogdoches became a hub of Revolutionary activity. Naturally, the Committee directed the local war effort beginning in 1835. Americans flooded through the town en route to the front near Goliad and San Antonio. From January 2 to December 14 of 1835, these newcomers filed 822 entrance certificates in Nacogdoches.[171]

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[169] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), I, 333; my translation.
[170] Paul Lack, who has done extensive scholarship on the Córdova Rebellion, prefers the first interpretation (Lack, "The Córdova Revolt," 90-93); Given Córdova's personal involvement in the ouster of de las Piedras and his later work with the Committee of Vigilance and Safety, this paper is less sure of that conclusion.
[171] Partin, "History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas," 185.

Various local figures swiftly asserted themselves in the quickly escalating war. Thomas Rusk and Haden H. Edwards led Nacogdochian volunteers to the Siege of Béxar that fall. Haden E. Edwards, having slipped back into Texas in the midst of the political chaos, traveled back across the Sabine to raise funds and troops for the Texan cause in the United States on behalf of the Committee of Vigilance and Safety the following year.[172] Furthermore, the mercantile Anglo elite of Nacogdoches contributed significantly to the financing of the burgeoning insurrection. In a single day, September 21, 1835, the Committee raised $2,651 – entirely from Anglo donors, including George Pollitt, who was elected *alcalde* for 1836.[173] Adolphus Sterne himself largely funded the famous New Orleans Greys, American volunteers fighting for Texas. Scholarly estimates place the amount contributed toward the Texas Revolution by Nacogdochians at up to or even exceeding $20,000.[174] None of this came from Tejanos. The Committee bought supplies to furnish local and American volunteers from Adaeseños, but that was the only tangible contribution from the Tejano community to the Committee's war effort. The Committee's most pro-Mexican action was the warm reception it gave the fugitive Governor Viesca when he reached Nacogdoches in January of 1836.[175] However, Committee members had begun advocating for Texan independence with publically posted broadsides on December 17, 1835.[176]

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[172] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LXI, 13; Committee Room, Nacogdoches, February 6, 1836, Edwards (Haden) papers, The Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin. Austin.
[173] Untitled, dated September 21, 1835, Nacogdoches, Texas, Documents Relating to the Committee of Vigilance and Safety of, January 3, 1835 – March 12, 1837, Box 124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.
[174] Partin, "History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County," 196.
[175] Handbook of Texas Online, "Viesca, Agustin," accessed March 09, 2017, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fvi04.
[176] "Public meetings: At a large meeting of the citizens of the municipality of Nacogdoches, convened on the 15th instant, Col. Richard Sparks was called to the chair," box BC DB 1835 (Broadsides Collection), The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

Among the most vocal proponents of the Texan rebels in Nacogdoches was the local newspaper, *Texean and Emigrant's Guide*, which had formerly bridged the town's Tejano and Anglo communities. Throughout 1835 and 1836 the newspaper printed sections of the Coahuila y Tejas Constitution as well as the Mexican Constitution of 1824, justifying the rebellious activities of Anglo Texans. The paper was firmly supportive of the Committee: "Good order prevails…for this order we are solely indebted to the Committee of Vigilance and Safety."[177] It also maintained the official Anglo position that the rebels were merely Federalists, and that even radicals such as Sam Houston were fighting for Federalism as opposed to an eventually independent Texan republic.[178] Furthermore, the paper pressured Tejanos to side with Texas rather than Mexico in the current struggle, wishing a "[t]housand curses on the Mexican who should be dastardly enough to join that murderous and anti-national plot."[179] Already, Anglos were forcing their Mexican neighbors to choose between loyalties – Texas and (for the moment) Federalism, or Mexico.

Following the Texan capture of San Antonio de Béxar and the imminent retaliatory assault from Santa Anna in 1836, it became clear that Texan independence might finally become a feasible option for the rebels. On February 1, *alcalde ad interim* George Pollitt held an election on the *Plaza Principal* for the Nacogdochian delegates to a convention at Washington-on-the-Brazos which would form a provisional government and settle the question of Texan independence. Pollitt decided to allow non-citizens to vote so long as they swore an oath of loyalty to the state government of Coahuila y Tejas – and any legitimate successor that might replace it. Many American volunteers in the war against Santa Anna, including a sizable troop of

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[177] *Texean and Emigrant's Guide,* Nacogdoches, November 28, 1835.
[178] *Ibid*., Jan 2, 1836.
[179] *Ibid*., November 28, 1835.

Kentuckian militiamen, thus gained the right to vote. When Adaeseño citizens protested, the well armed Kentuckians threatened to defend their perceived right to participate in the election by force if necessary. Outnumbered by American volunteers and their own revolutionary neighbors, the Mexicans relented. As such, the American volunteers cast the deciding votes for radical, pro-independence and pro-American Anglo delegates to the convention.[180]

On March 2, 1836, the convention voted for Texan independence. No Adaeseños were present for the vote, though Juan Antonio Padilla would have attended if not prevented by rain-swollen creeks.[181] Padilla was not representing his former hometown of Nacogdoches, however, but Guadalupe Victoria.[182] On March 12, the convention passed a resolution put forth by Nacogdochian Robert Potter, a recent arrival to Texas who later became Texas' Secretary of the Navy: that the town's militia be divided by race, Mexican and American. On March 14, *alcalde* Pollitt administered the last oath of allegiance to Mexico to one Thomas Jefferson Green before news of the decision reached him.[183] By April 9th, word of the Potter resolution had reached Nacogdoches. David A. Hoffman, the *alcalde*, ordered "every Mexican Citizen liable" to enlist, threatening that those who did not "shall be dealt with as enemies…in time of war."[184] Those who would not fight were ordered to remove themselves to the United States. Grudgingly, the Tejano militia reassembled under Córdova's leadership (he was serving concurrently as a judge at the time).

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[180] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LXII, 131-132.
[181] Arnoldo de León, *Mexican Americans in Texas: A Brief History,* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2009), 35.
[182] *Texean and Emigrants Guide*, Nacogdoches, November 28, 1838.
[183] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), XIV, 392.
[184] D.A. Hoffman, "Notice Given in the Town of Nacogdoches," April 9, 1836, A.J. Houston Papers, Texas State Library and Archives; quoted in Lack, "The Córdova Revolt," 92.

Still, neither the Committee's Anglo militia nor the Tejano militia trusted one another. Even if Howard had not labeled the Tejano's as a Mexican militia, Mexico was now the enemy of Texas and Texians. The American's pouring over the Sabine hoping to fight in a war could not – or would not – differentiate between Mexican Texans and Mexicans under Santa Anna. A series of incidents almost led to violence, including attempts on the part of Anglos to confiscate Mexican arms. In order to preserve the peace, Córdova made a deal with the Committee: the Mexican militia would serve in and around Nacogdoches, primarily as a deterrence to lawlessness and Native American raiding, which would free Anglo militiamen to fight Santa Anna elsewhere. R.A. Irion wrote to Sam Houston that the Adaeseños were willing to defend Nacogdoches against Indians, but not necessarily against Mexico itself.[185] Vicente Córdova himself also began to serve on the Committee. Out of 73 men who served on the Committee, only three were Tejanos: Córdova, Miguel Cortinas, and Juan B. Sazenave.[186] Cortinas also negotiated with the nearby Cherokee tribe to ensure their neutrality in the war with Mexico.[187] No longer capable of presenting himself as a neutral party, Córdova fled to Louisiana briefly as part of the Runaway Scrape, the flight of civilians and rebel combatants before Santa Anna's army, when the Mexican army drew too close to Nacogdoches for comfort.[188]

On April 21, 1836, the Texian victory at San Jacinto, and the subsequent capture of Santa Anna, secured Texas' *de facto* independence, though Mexico never legally relinquished their claim to Texas for the next twelve years. Refugees in Louisiana poured back into Texas through Nacogdoches. On June 6, Thomas J. Rusk released the Anglo volunteers from their service to the

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[185] Lack, "The Córdova Revolt," 92-93.
[186] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LXVII, 190-196.
[187] Untitled, August 30, 1836, Nacogdoches Records Number V, Box 124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas, 30-33.
[188] Partin, "History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas," 204.

Republic of Texas. Triumphant, they returned home to a town still largely divided. Anglos were ecstatic – most had never been fully satisfied by Mexican governance and now anticipated annexation by the United States. Tejanos were in a lurch, unsure of what their future in Texas or the United States entailed.

These feelings were only heightened in July, when U.S. Lieutenant Colonel William Whistler arrived in Nacogdoches accompanied by more than 400 American soldiers. Ostensibly there to protect American citizens in East Texas from Native American depredations (the order to enter Texas followed the Comanche-led assault on Parker's Fort in East Texas), Whistler soon realized that he was in Nacogdoches to assert American designs and ambitions in Texas.[189] Sam Houston had remarked that "Old Hickory [Andrew Jackson] considers Nacogdoches as 'natural territory'" of the U.S. as early as April of 1836.[190] Meanwhile, Nacogdoches was rapidly transforming about him. Pollitt finally resigned in August, replaced by Richard Sparks, formerly on the Committee.[191] Haden H. Edwards was elected to represent Nacogdoches in the legislature of the new Republic, though his election was briefly contested by a few other delegates vexed by the fact that a majority-Tejano district had elected him; they were not questioning why Mexicans would elect an Anglo, but rather that Mexicans were allowed to vote in the first place. A congressman from nearby Shelby County declared in an open debate he would prefer to "not

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[189] *Ibid*., 200; Winders, *Crisis in the Southwest,* 32.
[190] Untitled, dated September April 7, 1836, Nacogdoches, Texas, Documents Relating to the Committee of Vigilance and Safety of, January 3, 1835 – March 12, 1837, Box 124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.
[191] Nacogdoches Records Number V, Box 2R124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas, 42; Reeves Ericson, *Nacogdoches – gateway to Texas,* 146.

only deprive [Tejanos] of the right of suffrage, but of life."[192] Thankfully, Tejanos retained their rights (in theory if not always in practice) under the Texian Republic.

Córdova retained his position as a judge, though now he served Texas, not Mexico. Yet he was the last vestige of Adaeseño leadership in the legal system. When the *municipio*'s Primary Judge J.M. Dor began empaneling juries for the new Republic's local court, he included no Spanish surnames.[193] The first grand jury, assembled in September of 1837, was also entirely Anglo.[194] Adaeseños maintained their militia, though with the express permission of Judge Dor, who was himself acting on the behest of Houston. Like the U.S. regulars, the Mexican militia (as it was called) was to defend East Texas against Native American raiding ("*los movimientos hostiles de la parte de Muchas Tribas de Yndios*").[195] Despite the fact that rumors were already circulating that Mexicans and Native Americans were conspiring to wrest Texas from the Anglos, Dor was confidant that he could rely on Córdova's militiamen:

> "*Siempre he conosido los habitantes Mejicanos obedientes a las leyes qe. los rigen, y por tanto, en este caso, tengo la satisfaction que todos haran su deber, y popreis [sic] contar siempre, con el aprecio y considracion con qe. los ha tratado hasta la fecha su amigo."*[196]
>
> "I have always known the Mexican inhabitants obedient to the laws that govern them, and therefore, in this case, I have the satisfaction that all will do their duty, and you will always count on them, with the esteem and consideration that they have always treated you as their friend up to this date."

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[192] Debates of October 17, 1836*, Journals of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Texas: First Congress, first session* (Houston: Telegraph and Register, 1838), 52.
[193] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), I, 156 – 166.
[194] Ibid., LXVII, 187.
[195] Proclamation for a Mexican Militia, August 30, 1836, Nacogdoches Records Number V, Box 2R124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas, 40-41.
[196] *Ibid*., 40; my translation.

Dor's confidence, while certainly not shared by all Anglo Texians at this time, is not necessarily atypical. The actions of individuals such as Lorenzo de Zavala, Juan Seguín, José Antonio Navarro, and even Vicente Córdova during the revolt against Mexico had proven to many Anglos that many Tejanos could be trusted – not as Mexicans, but as Texians, and perhaps someday as Americans. The term "American" was even applied to some Tejanos at this time by the more progressive elements in Anglo society. The term had not yet been entirely confined to Anglo-Americans, but could apply to any (sufficiently European) people capable of embracing American ideals and culture.[197] Though many Anglos dismissed such notions, for now the Texian leadership was optimistic concerning the abilities of Tejanos, or at least the Tejano elites they had spent the last fifteen years living alongside and intermarrying with, to assimilate into Anglo society. Their own previous failure to assimilate into Mexican society was not considered analogous.

Such opinions, however, would not last long. On December 18, 1836, Whistler and his U.S. troops left Texas; the supposed Native American threat had passed, and, more importantly, Texas' annexation was no longer imminent due to regional politicking in the United States. Furthermore, Mexico refused to honor the treaty granting Texian independence forced on him upon his capture, and Texians feared a renewal of hostilities with their far larger neighbor. The Comanches and others still harried the borderlands. Anglo immigrants continued to pour across the Sabine. These new Texians had never lived or fought alongside a Mexican, and perceived Texas as a microcosm of the United States, particularly the American South – a state for and dominated by Anglos. The place of Tejanos, including Adaeseños such as Vicente Córdova, was increasingly precarious in the young, teetering Republic of Texas.

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[197] Crisp, "Anglo-Texan Attitudes toward the Mexican, 1821-1945," 94-98.

Chapter 4: Nacogdoches Transformed – Texian Governance, The Córdova Rebellion, and Americanization, 1836-1846

> "To exclude the race [ethnic Mexicans]…would be injurious to those people, to ourselves, and to the magnanimous character which the Americans have ever possessed."[198]

Despite the participation of and leadership by Tejanos during the Texas Revolution, the Republic of Texas was often hostile to its Mexican inhabitants. Their rights were ignored and flouted by Anglos, who increasingly dominated the society and politics of Republican Texas. Such actions led to the greatest military challenge (except Mexico) to the Republican government's legitimacy: the Córdova Rebellion of 1838 and 1839, which pitted Nacogdochians against each other and against the militias and government of the Republic of Texas in an ultimately unsuccessful armed insurrection. The Córdova Rebellion's ultimate failure was likely a forgone conclusion. It could not have succeeded without military support from Mexico, and Mexico was in no position to provide it at the time. Furthermore, it was too small an insurrection to have provided much of a threat to the Republic of Texas. Its own participants only took up arms when they believed their plot had been prematurely discovered. Nevertheless, it shocked and terrified the residents of Texas, Anglo and Tejano alike. If any other Tejano communities sympathized with the rebellious Adaeseños, they did not show it. Juan Seguín himself, former *alcalde* of Nacogdoches and now a congressman representing San Antonio de Béxar in the Republic's legislature, composed a law that stripped unrepentant followers of Córdova of their property.[199]

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[198] Wm. F Weeks*, Debates of the Texas Convention* (Houston: J.W. Cruger, 1846), 157.
[199] Timothy M. Matovina, "Between Two Worlds." In *Tejano Journey, 1770-1850,* ed. Gerald E. Poyo (73-88. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 77.

The Rebellion ultimately devastated Nacogdoches' Tejano community. All ethnic Mexicans were suspect of complicity with the rebels, and the Anglos promised strict and severe justice. No Anglo could trust their Adaeseño neighbor to be a fellow loyal citizen; no Mexican Nacogdochian could trust their Anglo neighbor to conduct the Republic's justice in a fair and unbiased manner. Adaeseños feared that their community's destruction was at hand. This was not to be the case, at least not entirely. But Nacogdoches was about to undergo another drastic transformation. Following the Rebellion, Nacogdoches' Tejano community shattered, scattered, and relinquished their position as Nacogdoches' primary ethnic community. Prior to the Rebellion, the town of Nacogdoches had been a Tejano enclave in an Anglo county and Republic. After 1839, Nacogdoches was an Anglo city. Many Adaeseños remained, but Nacogdoches would never again truly be theirs. As Adaeseños no longer presented a plausible threat, several Anglos fought on their behalf to protect their rights as citizens – but the Mexican Texan community no longer had he strength to do so on its own.

4.1. Nacogdoches Divided: Rapid Anglicization and the Córdova Rebellion

Anglos had initially hoped that the Republic of Texas would be swiftly annexed by the United States. But as the prospect of Texas entering the United States dimmed in the 1830s, Anglo Texans began reconsidering their distinctly (Anglo) American identity. Texian Anglos began crafting a pan-Anglo-American identity that could serve citizens of Texas who had first been, or were descended of, citizens of the United States. Such feelings ultimately manifested in the Presidency of Mirabeau Lamar (1839-1841), who opposed American annexation and

promoted the expansion of Texas at the expense of Mexico and Native American societies. The development of the pan-Anglo Texian identity forced Tejanos to make a choice: would they retain their cultural and personal bonds with Mexico and construct a pan-Mexican identity, or embrace a specifically Texian and Tejano identity focused on their distinct communal identities?[200]

Anglos were conscious of the threat Mexico might pose in the near future (Mexico was temporarily involved in another Federalist-Centralist civil war and unable to expend military resources on Texas in the late 1830s); they remembered the terrors and massacres of Santa Anna, and proudly maintained the cultural chauvinism that had disrupted their assimilation into Mexican society prior to Texian independence. As such, Anglo Texians preferred that Tejanos craft a solely Texan identity. Officially, the Texian identity was pluralistic: "Our population," crowed a Nacogdoches newspaper, "is composed of the chivalrous of all nations, rallied to the standard of the single star of the West, to oppose" – and here the pluralistic narrative began to collapse – "the oppression of a semi barbarous race."[201] Anglo Texans did not want their ethnically Mexican neighbors to be Mexicans, but to assume a purely Texian identity; they had to choose whether to be counted amongst the "chivalrous" or the "semi barbarous."

This Texian identity necessitated the Anglicization of, and the imposition of American customs and traditions on, Tejano communities. Nacogdoches was not immune to this. The city was officially incorporated into the Republic as an Anglo-style aldermanic municipality rather than an *ayuntamiento*-run *municipio* on June 5, 1837.[202] The town and its surrounding area also became a county within the Republic, named for Nacogdoches, which was the county seat.

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[200] Crisp, "Anglo-Texan Attitudes Toward the Mexican, 1821-1845," 327-328.
[201] *Texas Chronicle,* Nacogdoches, February 28, 1838.
[202] Gammel, *The Laws of Texas,* 1,298-9.

Furthermore, Anglo Nacogdochians became guarantors of their Tejano neighbor's loyalty to the Republic, and signed legal statements assuring that suspect Mexicans had fulfilled their civic duties as Texians during the Revolution.[203] Adaeseños initially seemed willing to allow such changes. The election of H. H. Edwards to the House of Representatives indicated that Nacogdoches' Tejanos, whether out of sincere convictions or to preserve themselves and their rights in the young Republic, were willing to accept the Texian identity that Anglos thrust upon them.

But the tensions that had come to the fore during the Texas Revolution between Nacogdoches' Anglos and Tejanos had not dissipated with the war's resolution. In fact, they increased under the town's empowered Anglo leadership. A petition in September of 1836, signed by eighty-two Nacogdochian Anglos, demanded the disenfranchisement of the Adaeseños, who had "by their repeated act shown that they ware [*sic*] the friends of our enemies and the enemies of our friends."[204] Local Anglo officials even kept a separate polling record for Mexican Nacogdochian voters. No record of the Congressional response to the petition remains, but no such voting controversies re-emerged in the following years.[205] It remains unclear what followed this petition.

The reorganization of the local government, courts, and law enforcement also threatened the prosperity of local Tejanos. Unscrupulous Anglos used the courts in particular, as well as Anglo-dominated law enforcement, to seize Tejano property through suspect suits. This happened throughout Texas, and Nacogdoches was no exception. Only eighteen percent of Nacogdoches'

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[203] Nepomucenco Castrillon Papers, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.
[204] [Nacogdoches Petition] To the Senate and House of Representatives, September 1836, Memorials and Petitions, Texas State library and Archives; quoted in Lack, "The Córdova Revolt," 94.
[205] *Ibid*., 94-95.

Tejanos managed to patent their land claims.[206] Many others lost their valuable lands to Anglos anxious to be near the boomtown. There was little Tejanos could do to prevent this. Nacogdoches had long been a Tejano stronghold, despite the very Anglo nature of its surrounding countryside. But Nacogdoches' demographics, thanks to the influx of immigrants during and following the Texas Revolution, had finally tipped in the favor of Anglos. While the town of Nacogdoches retained a Mexican ethnic majority, the county was primarily Anglo.

To make things worse, rumors of a conspiracy between Mexico, Tejanos, and Native Americans (specifically, the nearby Cherokee) to attack the Republic's Anglo settlements persisted and flourished in the years following the Revolution. One Adaeseño, José María Madrano, implicated several of his neighbors, including former *alcalde*, judge, and militia captain Vicente Córdova, in such a plot in the spring of 1837, prompting the temporary resuscitation of the Committee of Vigilance and Safety and the wartime Anglo militia. It soon became clear, however, that Madrano harbored a personal grudge against Córdova, and the suspicions against him subsided. Belief in a Mexican-Native American conspiracy persisted, however, due to the general lawlessness of the areas north and west of Nacogdoches, where property disputes, runaway slaves, and livestock rustling along the frontier promoted a state of constant conflict and suspicion between Anglos, Tejanos, and Native Americans. Such tensions nearly boiled over in the spring of 1838, when an unidentifiable group killed former *alcalde* Richard Sparks and Indian agent Jess Watkins near the Trinity River's headwaters. Again, Nacogdoches' Anglos petitioned the Republic's Congress, this time for the right to establish and

[206] Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836*, 319-325.

secure arms for a special militia for the town's defense. Though the militia was explicitly meant to combat hostile Native Americans, Tejanos were suspect as their co-conspirators.[207]

Fearing that these ethnic tensions would escalate into violence, Vicente Córdova, Antonio Menchaca (who now commanded the local Tejano militia), and three others wrote a letter to President Sam Houston expressing their concerns over the security of their lives and property in the face of Anglo aggression.[208] The writers promised to do no harm to their Anglo neighbors unless threatened with it themselves. The Tejano community leaders gave the letter, written in Spanish, to Thomas J. Rusk in March of 1838, prior to Sparks' death. Rusk had promised to translate the letter and forward it to Houston – and forgot to do so, perhaps sealing the fate of Nacogdoches' swiftly worsening race relations.[209]

Mexico was aware of the situation in Eastern Texas, and sought to take advantage of it. General Vicente Filisola, commander of the government (that is, Centralist) forces along the Texas-Mexico frontier, hoped to make Anglo fears of a Mexican-Tejano-Indian conspiracy into a reality. He sent operative Pedro Miracle into Texas to scout out potential allies amongst the Republic's disaffected Native Americans and Tejanos in June of 1838. Miracle had reached East Texas by July, where he first encountered Vicente Córdova. At a meeting of Native American and Adaeseño leaders in the Cherokee country northwest of Nacogdoches, Miracle advised that the would-be rebels prepare for renewed warfare between Texas and Mexico, in which they would take up arms themselves. Miracle soon began making his way back to Mexico, meeting with various Native American tribes as he did so – and attracting attention from the Republic of Texas government. On August 20, Texian forces killed Miracle in a clash along the Red River.

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[207] Lack, "The Córdova Revolt," 95-96.
[208] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LIII, 266.
[209] Lack, "The Córdova Revolt," 96-97.

All the papers on his person, including a journal in which he had meticulously recorded his contacts and meetings in Texas, fell into Texian hands.

It is unclear what Córdova was thinking at the time. Whether he believed Rusk or Houston had ignored him, and his degree of faith in Miracle's promises of aid in overthrowing the Texian regime, is unrecorded. In fact, the only document left behind by the participants in the Córdova Rebellion is its manifesto, issued after fighting had commenced. His family later told Anglos curious about the insurrection that he had been hesitant and initially unwilling to launch so drastic an undertaking.[210] Furthermore, he subverted militia captain Antonio Menchaca's authority in forming a rebel Tejano militia. Menchaca, at this time the only Tejano in Nacogdoches' government, was quite possibly unaware of Córdova's intentions. When fighting commenced later that summer, Menchaca tried to negotiate between the Texians and rebels.

The fighting itself began when a party of Anglos pursuing horse thieves stumbled into some of Córdova's rebels on August 4, 1838. Both parties likely believed they were under attack, leading to a shoot-out in which one Anglo died. On August 6, several Nacogdoches Tejanos took Zechariah Finley and Morris M. Danzey as hostages; they died in their custody. Rusk began both organizing an Anglo militia and attempting to contact the rebels. Antonio Menchaca, who agreed to act as his emissary to Córdova's forces, supposedly remarked to Rusk that "the Mexicans were doing wrong and that he [Menchaca] would get as many of them as he could to leave Córdova."[211] Simultaneously, local planter John Durst informed Rusk that this was not a small rebel or outlaw band, but the beginnings of popular Tejano revolt. Rusk set about rallying his troops and increasing their numbers. "A contemptible enemy [unintelligible] in the very midst of the people of Nacogdoches County," he warned, who, "like a worthless band of cowards…have

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[210] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LXV, 106.
[211] *Telegraph and Texas Register,* March 27, 1839.

had illicit commerce with…the enemy [Mexico] and have attempted to excite bands of [probably "worthless"; the word is only somewhat intelligible] savages…to the indiscriminate slaughter of your wives and children."[212] The only lives taken or threatened at this point were those of a handful of men.

Sam Houston himself, in the waning days of his first term as President of Texas, returned to his former hometown, Nacogdoches, to address the situation. He too selected an emissary to negotiate with the rebels – José María Madrano. Houston issued a public, printed document on the 8th in both Spanish and English to accompany Madrano's negotiations. In it, he promised a general amnesty for any rebels (not excluding Córdova himself) who turned themselves in or returned to their homes. Houston simultaneously banned unlawful public assemblies and promised severe retribution to any who persisted in treason.

> "…The Executive being willing to admit and to attribute those measures to ill-informed fears of some of the persons and that they have no desire to do anything against the laws, and much less with an intention to commit the monstrous crime of Treason! and that all those who are willing to return to their duty as good citizens, receiving the guaranties of the constitution for their lives and property and not be disturbed in the enjoyment of their homes. Therefore, be it known, I, Sam Houston, President of the Republic of Texas, hereby prohibit all unlawful assemblies or embodying of men with arms in their hands without such assemblies are authorized by the Constitution…in case any injustice has been done them and they can have redress from the civil authorities of the nation, who will investigate the matter and do full justice to the injured party. And I hereby declare that all those who owe allegiance to this Government who after the promulgation of this proclamation shall bemain [*sic*] in a hostile array shall be considered as enemies of the republic and traitors to the nation. The honest citizen shall have nothing to fear, the Laws will protect him in his rights as well as in his property and in his lives."[213]

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[212] Head Quarters on the Morale, 10th August 1838, General Correspondence July-November 1838, Box 2G33, Thomas Jefferson Rusk Papers, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.
[213] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LIII, 262.

The same day, Rusk raised the Anglo militia and began marching toward Córdova's camp, 32 miles from town along the Angelina River. Houston meanwhile sent calls for aid to the militias of neighboring communities, and even requested arms of the U.S. army.[214] Estimates pegged the rebels at around 100 in number. "I have fought side by side with these Mexicans," reminisced an Anglo Nacogdochian. "They are brave men and sharp shooters."[215]

Córdova issued a brief, public retort to Houston on August 10, originally in Spanish though soon translated:

> "The People of Nacogdoches being tired of suffering the injuries and usurpation of their rights, they cannot do less than say: that they are embodied with arms in their hands to sustain their individual rights, as well as those of the nation to which they belong. They are ready to spill the last drop of blood, and confess as they have done heretofore that they do not acknowledge any of the existing Laws, through which they are offered guaranties for their lives and property, and only beg that none of their families may be molested promising in good faith to observe the same towards your families."[216]

The signers of this manifesto, 19 in all, included Vicente Córdova, 12 other Tejanos (Juan Arriola, José Arrocha, Juan Santos Coy, Atanacio de la Serda, Crecencio Morales, Juan José Acosta, Juan José Rodríguez, José de la Baume, Antonio Calderan, Julio Lazarín, Antonio Flores, and Guadalupe Cárdenas), Italian-born Vicente Micheli, former slave Joshua N. Robertson, and Anglos Nathaniel Norris, James Quinilty, Napoleon DeWaltz, and William Donovan. The Anglo signers were all longtime residents of Nacogdoches from the 1820s or earlier.

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[214] Lack, "The Córdova Revolt," 101.
[215] P.A. Sublett to Sam Houston, August 9, 1838, Andrew Jackson Houston papers, Texas State Archives; quoted in Lack, "The Córdova revolt," 101.
[216] "Response," August 30, 1838, Nacogdoches Records Number V, Box 124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas, 41.

It is unclear how many Anglos (or free African Americans) fought with the rebels, but their presence indicates that the Córdova Rebellion was not merely a Tejano-Native American uprising against the Republic of Texas. Rather, it bore striking similarities to the conflicts pitting Nacogdochians against Edwards and de las Piedras, at least as its participants understood it. The document declares the Texian regime to be outsiders imposing their illegitimate rule on Nacogdoches and threatening the safety of its inhabitants. To a degree this is true – most of those opposing the rebels had been in Texas less than a decade, if half that time. But, unlike during the popular revolts against de las Piedras and, to a lesser extent, Haden E. Edwards, these enemies claimed to speak legitimately for the majority of those living in and around Nacogdoches, and likely did. More importantly, the influx of militiamen form neighboring communities ensured that Córdova's rebels were hopelessly outnumbered. Isaac W. Burton, who had fought against de las Piedras and now against his former ally Córdova, reported that the Anglos had as many as 1,000 militiamen mustered by the fall of 1838.[217]

Perhaps because of these overwhelming numbers, Houston and Rusk never seemed to take the rebels themselves too seriously. Their primary concern was preventing the restive Native Americans of East Texas – particularly the Cherokees, whose place in Texas had been tenuous for decades – from allying with the rebels. The Rebellion itself "was a deep and well-laid scheme to involve the country in a general Indian war," wrote Rusk.[218] Some Cherokee individuals (and members of other tribes) had taken up arms in the Rebellion, but the tribe itself was maintaining a position of neutrality – though they were allowing the rebels to traverse and take shelter in lands they effectively controlled. Both Houston and Rusk wrote repeatedly to Chief Bowles.

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[217] *Ibid*., 41; Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LIII, 97.
[218] Thomas Jefferson Rusk to M.B. Lamar, 1838 Aug. 24, *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar,* II, ed. Charles Adam Gulick Jr. (New York: AMS Press, 1973),

They dismissed the rebels, saying that "[a] small band of Mexicans who have enjoyed all the benefits of the country and never shared any of the [unintelligible] dangers have without cause killed one of our men and have insulted our President and raised arms against us."[219] Both men wanted the Cherokees to turn over, or at last to turn away, the rebels. Houston relied on his personal friendship with Bowles, addressing him as "my Bro." and the Cherokees as "my Red Brothers." Rusk was less cordial in his letters to Bowles:

> "A few Mexicans who have always been well treated by the Americans and who have never done anything to sustain the country in her troubles have without any cause stolen our horses, killed one of our men, and have now raised their army and threatened to fight us, but when we had collected an equal [number] of our warriors, they ran off like cowards and have taken refuge in your nation. We have collected a number of our warriors to chastise these men as they deserve. We <u>are</u> friends of your <u>people</u> and do not wish to harm them…if they remain peaceable and quiet we will do them no harm. We believe the talks you have had with us and that you are our friends…but it is wrong to allow our enemies to come to your nation."[220]

Rusk's threat was implicit. Such letters between Rusk, Houston, Bowles, and other Native American leaders in Northeast Texas continued throughout the fall. Rusk grew increasingly impatient, going so far as to warn Bowles "the Mexicans…will bring you into trouble or war."[221] Rusk's courier to Bowles was an interesting choice: William Goyens, a free (and possibly escaped) former slave, possibly chosen to undermine Córdova's position as a defender of non-Anglos.

Even though Rusk and Houston did not cooperate well – Rusk saw Houston's preference for a defensive position around Nacogdoches as a hindrance – their attempts to intimidate Native

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[219] Head Quarters, Angelina River, 13 August 1838, to Chief Bowles, War Chief of the Cherokee Nation, General Correspondence July-November 1838, Box 2G33, Thomas Jefferson Rusk Papers, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.
[220] Thomas Jefferson Rusk to Col. Bowles, 13 August 1838, *Ibid.*
[221] Rusk to Col. Bowles, 9 October 1838, *Ibid.*

American tribes worked.[222] Native American leaders, most importantly those of the Cherokees, were unwilling to ally with the Rebellion when the Texians stood well armed on their borders. Eventually, Native American leaders realized they could not continue to obfuscate with Rusk and the Texians. The Cherokees and other tribes began negotiating in earnest with the Republic by November to either talk down or disperse Córdova's rebels, though these talks were inconclusive.[223]

Though Córdova was managing a force of approximately 200 insurgents at its height, this was nowhere near what he (and Miracle) had hoped to garner, and he soon scattered his forces and fled further into the wilderness of Northeast Texas. Rusk pursued him until August 20th before returning to Nacogdoches. The Texians believed Córdova to have fled for good, likely to safety in Matamoros.[224] This was not the case. Córdova reorganized his insurgents, and confronted Texian militia forces on September 27, 1838. Córdova's rebels were victorious, and the skirmish provoked Rusk to once more take the field with hundreds of militiamen at his back. On the evening of October 15th, Córdova's rebels ambushed Rusk's camp. The battle was indecisive, though Rusk eventually pulled back to Nacogdoches. Córdova continued to haunt the woodland wilderness north of Nacogdoches until the following spring, occasionally raiding Anglo settlements in order to supply his troops. All the while, however, rebels peeled away from Córdova's insurgency, losing faith in the Rebellion's potential for success. In March of 1839, Córdova finally received word from Mexico in the form of Manuel Flores, Miracle's successor. General Valentín Canalizo had replaced Filisola, and sent Flores to inform Córdova that no

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[222] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LXV, 10.
[223] Shreveport 29 November 1838, General Correspondence July-November 1838, Box 2G33, Thomas Jefferson Rusk Papers, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.
[224] 1838 Aug. 17, J. M. Henrie to M.B. Lamar, *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar,* II, 205.

Mexican invasion of Texas was imminent and that Córdova and his followers should pull back to the Texas-Mexican frontier beyond San Antonio.

Córdova's Rebellion was effectively over. Native American rebels, unwilling to leave their tribal lands in East Texas, deserted *en masse*; so too, assumedly, did others, leaving Córdova with at most seventy-five followers. Furthermore, the Cherokees had had enough of the warfare on their lands and were wary of the new Texian president, Lamar. A peace conference was proposed between the Texians and Native American tribes implicated in the Córdova Rebellion, and the Cherokees purportedly denied Córdova himself admission.[225] His hopes shattered and low on supplies, Córdova led his remaining rebels toward Matamoros. On the way, a deserter of his, "Black" Tom Moore, fled to Texian Colonel Edward Burleson, whose militia company, drawn from the Anglos of the Colorado River Valley, was attempting to intercept the rebels. With Moore's help, Burleson ambushed Córdova's band near Seguin, Texas. Of Córdova's fifty-three remaining men, between eighteen and thirty died (reports vary), and Córdova himself was badly wounded. The survivors fled to Mexico, pursued much of the way by Texian militias. Córdova spent the next three years fighting alongside Mexican regulars and guerrillas in the disputed borderlands of Texas and Mexico between the Río Grande and Nueces River. He died during the Battle of Salado Creek on September 27, 1842 while serving under Mexican General Adrián Woll, whom the Texians repulsed from San Antonio during the battle.[226]

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[225] Lack, "The Córdova Revolt," 103.
[226] *Ibid*., 104; Nance, *After San Jacinto,* 124-137; Partin, 212-213.

4.2. Anglo Justice in the Aftermath of the Córdova Rebellion

Despite the rancor between Nacogdoches' ethnic communities, several Anglos actually displayed an odd respect for Córdova during and after the Rebellion. Though Anglos labeled him "antagonistic" and "personally prejudiced against the whites," his conduct and skill, and that of his followers, was accorded a reluctant respect.[227] Anglo officials and militiamen did not remark on his ability to garner Anglo followers. Sam Houston's Secretary of War (and later Lamar's Secretary of State), Barnard Bee, believed that the Córdova Rebellion's goal was "the destruction of the whites." Bee, however, also blamed the "intolerably *rude* population" of Anglos in Nacogdoches, which had insured that there were no "gross instances of wrong wanting to induce them [Nacogdoches' Mexican Texans] to discontent;" in fact, "The Mexicans of Nacogdoches it seems have never been contented" with Texian and Anglo government, he surmised, a fact due in large part to mistreatment by Anglos.[228] Bee personally thought the Rebellion had irreparably damaged Tejano-Anglo relations in that area. He was correct, but his solution was too extreme for the Houston and Lamar administrations: that the Republic should purchase the property of Adaeseños and assist them in relocating to Louisiana or even Mexico.[229]

Instead, Houston and Rusk used public stores and resources to administer to the needs of family members whom the rebels had left behind. Quartermaster John S. Roberts, who administered these resources, also served as the steward of property abandoned by Tejanos who had joined the rebels or fled the fighting and the possibility of indiscriminate Anglo reprisals.

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[227] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LXV, 106.
[228] Barnard Bee to David Burnet, September 6, 1838, *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar,* II, ed. Charles Adam Gulick Jr. (New York: AMS Press, 1973), 218-219.
[229] Letter, Barnard E. Bee to Ashbel Smith, August 26, 1838, letters: 1838 July-August (1 of 3), Box 2G220, Ashbel Smith Papers, The Briscoe Center American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

Some property was permanently seized. Roberts himself actually bought the old Ybarbo Stone House previously owned by Córdova.[230] Others filed suit against Córdova for damages sustained during the rebellion, and much of his property was disseminated amongst these claimants, including his ranch.[231] Rusk attempted to prevent the militias under his company from looting from Tejanos, knowing that those uninvolved with the rebels might be victimized, but the task ultimately proved impossible. Both he and Houston threatened to penalize militiamen who looted, but it is unclear to what degree this was enforced or enforceable.[232]

Yet whereas Houston and Rusk tried to mitigate the harm done to Adaeseños in the Rebellion's aftermath, the local civil authorities of Nacogdoches did not. Thirty-three Tejanos were arrested on October 10, 1838, and indicted by an entirely Anglo grand jury. Soon, that number climbed to forty-nine. Amongst those were Antonio Menchaca, who had assisted Rusk personally during the Rebellion, and even one of the Republic's own spies, Juan Piñeda, who had brought the Texian government reports of Tejano-Native American collusions in the recent past.[233] For the convenience of the court, the indicted were divided into three groups. The first group, including Menchaca, had their counsel, William C. Duffield, obtain a change of venue to nearby San Augustine for the trial. They supposed that they could not get a fair trial in Nacogdoches or Nacogdoches County. Isaac Burton likely reflected Anglo Nacogdochian sentiments when he remarked about the upcoming trial, "we shall have a fine hanging frolic shortly."[234]

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[230] McDonald, "Old Stone Fort."
[231] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LIII, 242.
[232] Crisp, "Anglo-Texan Attitudes Toward the Mexican," 361-361; Lack, "The Córdova Revolt," 105-106.
[233] Lack, "The Córdova Revolt,"
[234] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LIII, 97 (quote), 265-273.

The actual trial began on January 7, 1839 – the indicted remained in jail until then. The courtroom was chaotic. On January 8th, Duffield received a collective fine of $125 for multiple instances of contempt of court. His opponent, District Attorney of San Augustine George Lane, received one $25 fine for an identical infraction the same day.[235] This occurred not in the trial itself, but during jury selection. Repeatedly, Lane referred to the defendants as "Mexican citizens," implying their otherness and enemy status to the Anglo court and jury. Lane's case, however, was in shambles. State witnesses (some of them Tejano) actually came to the defense of the accused, claiming they had been forced to attend rebel gatherings or only attended so as to hear Houston's amnesty offer presented. Adolphus Sterne actually testified that he had been with Menchaca and Rusk at the time when Menchaca was supposedly seen amongst Córdova's rebels. Nonetheless, after three days of deliberation, the jury delivered an astonishing verdict on January 13: all were found not guilty of treasonous activity save for Antonio Menchaca. The following day, the trial of the second group of supposed traitors began. On January 15, that group was acquitted entirely. Lane did not bother to bring the third and final group to trial, and dropped the charges against them.[236]

Duffield subsequently attempted to aid Menchaca. After Judge Shelby Corzine overruled Duffield's request for an arrest of judgment and a motion for a new trial, he sentenced Antonio Menchaca on January 16. On Friday, February 22, he would hang until dead as a traitor.[237] It was then that San Augustine's Anglos came to Menchaca's rescue. A petition written and signed by San Augustinians (including the San Augustine sheriff) on Menchaca's behalf was forwarded to President Lamar. The petition detailed how seven of the nine jurors had effectively been held

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[235] *Ibid*., LIII, 330-331.
[236] *Ibid*., LIII, 271-337.
[237] *Ibid*., LIII, 338.

hostage by the other two, prevented from leaving jury deliberations until they found Menchaca guilty.[238] Lamar accordingly pardoned Menchaca on February 18, though Menchaca subsequently went into a sort of self-imposed exile in Louisiana, likely for fear of Anglo vigilantism.

Another trial soon commenced for several individuals implicated in the murder of Morris M. Danzey and Zachariah Finley as part of the Córdova Rebellion, though they received no change of venue from the Nacogdoches County Court. Two – Jesús Gamos and José Domingo Pérez (called José Antonio Pérez in some sources) – were convicted of the murders, but their counsel moved for an arrest of judgment on grounds of an "insufficient" and "informal" indictment. The court agreed, and both verdicts were overturned in April, 1839.[239]

4.3. American Annexation and The Fate of Mexican Nacogdoches

Though the Texian justice system had supported the rights of Tejanos after the Córdova Rebellion, the place of Adaeseños in Nacogdoches was under threat of lingering Anglo animosity. The Rebellion served as a prologue of sorts to a series of events in the early 1840s that further soured the feelings of Anglo Texians toward Tejanos: and economic downturn caused by a dip in cotton prices and the renewal of armed conflict with Mexico, during which Mexico occupied San Antonio not once, but twice. Nacogdoches was no longer safe for Tejanos, particularly those implicated in the Córdova insurgency or who had suffered at the hands of looting Anglo militiamen.

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[238] *Ibid*., LIII, 344.
[239] *Ibid*., LIII, 308; Lack, "The Córdova Revolt," 108.

The ultimate result of the Rebellion was a diaspora of Mexicans from Nacogdoches and the impoverishment of those that remained. The 1840 census of the Republic of Texas (more of a tax record than an actual census) shows less than thirty Tejano taxpayers in the community.[240] The tax records for Nacogdoches from 1841 feature only four Spanish-surname taxed households out of a population of 4,789 persons (including slaves).[241] The tax records concerning property held within the county in that year, however, tell a slightly different story: of the six Mexican Texian persons it lists, all owned slaves, indicating a degree of economic Anglicization amongst those Tejanos secure enough in their position to remain in the community. The Taliaferro family alone owned twenty slaves.[242] Yet the number of Adaeseños, and the quantity of wealth they possessed, declined in the upcoming years. The records of taxable property for 1847, one year after American annexation, display a drastic change: only three Tejanos are listed, owning three slaves among them.[243]

These tax records, however, do not reflect the size of Nacogdoches' Tejano community at the time. Nacogdoches's Mexican community was still one of the largest in Texas, but it was no longer as large as it had been before the Texas Revolution and Córdova Rebellion. While many Nacogdochian Tejanos left Nacogdoches, many of them for Louisiana, scores of others

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[240] Gifford, White, editor, *The 1840 Census of the Republic of Texas* (Austin, Texas: The Pemberton Press, 19660, 120-136.

[241] "The Enumeration of the Inhabitants of the Town of Nacogdoches," in Nacogdoches, Texas. County clerk's office Tax book, 1841, Box 2R124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas, p. 9.

[242] "Assesment of Property Lying within Nacogdoches County Owned by Residents Thereof made by Andrew Caddel Assessor and Collector for the Year 1841,"in Nacogdoches, Texas. County clerk's office Tax book, 1841, Box 2R124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

[243] "Assesment of Property Lying within Nacogdoches County Owned by Residents Thereof made by Andrew Caddel Assessor and Collector for the Year 1847,"in Nacogdoches, Texas. County clerk's office Tax book, 1841, Box 2R124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

remained. Those that did typically did not linger within the town itself, but relocated to Mora, a nearby suburb whose name likely derived from the Mora family.[244] Self-segregation became a sort of self-defense. The 1847 census of Nacogdoches County showed only six Tejanos living in the town itself, whereas the entire Mexican population of the county numbered 225 persons in seventy-one households (there are no Córdovas listed in the census).[245] The total population of Nacogdoches County at the time was 4,453.[246]

The Tejano community did not entirely remove themselves from the town their forefathers had founded. Their new Catholic church, which received its own priest in 1844, was there, as were the various Anglo-run stores they had to some degree depended on since the late 1820s.[247] A Catholic priest dispatched to Nacogdoches to resuscitate its dwindling parish (the Protestants now thoroughly outnumbered the Catholics, who had not had a formal church since 1801) reported several hundred Tejanos gathering for outdoor services in the town.[248] Furthermore, the Anglo and Tejano communities also continued to form matrimonial bonds, as they had since the early 1800s. Between 1837 and 1850, fourteen marriages joined a Tejano and Anglo in marriage. In a surprising reversal of the general trend in Texas, where Anglo men often married into the families of landed Tejano elites, Tejano men outnumbered their Anglo counterparts by two in these marriages.[249] Overall, however, Adaeseños lived quietly on the fringes of Nacogdoches after 1839, allowing their town to become an Anglo city in order to preserve their lives and property at a safe distance.

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[244] Lack, "The Córdova Revolt," 108.
[245] Carolyn Reeves Ericson, transcriber, *1847 Census, Nacogdoches County,* The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.
[246] *Ibid*.
[247] Partin, "History of Nacoogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877," 144.
[248] Partin, "History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877," 144-145.
[249] Frances Terry Ingmire, compiler, *Marriage Records of Nacogdoches County, Texas, 1837-1872* (St Louis, MO: Ingmire [self-published], 1979), 1-10.

Anglos had one final chance to strip Adaeseños of their rights in 1845 and 1846. After nearly a decade, the United States was finally poised to annex the broke, battered Republic of Texas. Beginning on July 4, 1845, delegates met in Austin to compose a State Constitution for Texas upon its annexation. The only Tejano at the convention was José Antonio Navarro, representing San Antonio de Béxar. The Nacogdochian delegates were Thomas J. Rusk, Convention President, Joseph L. Hogg, and W.B. Ochiltree (who replaced Charles S. Taylor). The fiercest debates at the Convention centered on question of voting rights. Section 1 of Article Third of the proposed constitution declared "Every free male person who shall have attained the age of twenty-one years…(Indians not taxed, Africans and descendants of Africans excepted,) shall be deemed a qualified elector."[250] The phrase "not taxed" spared many Adaeseños, who traced much of their ancestry to Adaes Caddos, from being disenfranchised. However, the original draft recommended that the vote and citizenship be limited to "free white males."[251] When a delegate from Harrison County objected to striking the term, it was Rusk who argued that to do so would be unjustifiable. Rusk hoped that:

> "…the word white would be stricken out. If, as decided by the courts of the United States, all others except Africans and the descendants of Africans are white, where is the necessity of retaining it…But if it remains, it may give rise to misunderstanding and difficulty. Every gentleman will put his own construction on the term *white*. It may be contended that we intend to exclude the [Mexican] race we found in possession of the country when we came here. This would be injurious to those people, to ourselves, and to the magnanimous character which the Americans have ever possessed."[252]

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[250] *Journals of the Convention, assembled at the city of Austin on the Fourth of July, 1845, for the purpose of framing a constitution for the State of Texas*, facsimile with introduction by Mary Bell Hart (Austin, Texas: Shoal Creek Publishers, 1974), *341.*
[251] *Ibid*., 54.
[252] Wm. F. Weeks*, Debates of the Texas Convention*, 157.

Rusk had lived in Nacogdoches since before the Revolution. He knew how Anglos, some of whom under his won command, had mocked the rights of his Adaeseño neighbors, and would do so again if presented an opportunity.

A delegate from Brazoria, Hiram G. Runnels, challenged Rusk, claimed that "the term white…by no inference or construction under heaven could exclude Mexicans."[253] Runnels himself was a recent immigrant from Mississippi, represented a fully Anglo community, and presumably had little understanding of Texas' racial politics. He was likely not ingenuous in his counter argument to Rusk; earlier in the debates, he had defended the rights of Native Americans and their capacity to be "good citizens."[254] But several delegates, including Navarro, objected to Runnels' platitudes, stating that the term "white" could very well mean whatever an election judge willed. Henry L. Kinney, representing Tejano-dominated San Patricio, remarked that his own constituents' voting rights had been obstructed in the past by individuals claiming "they could not be considered white persons; they were Mexicans."[255]

In response to Kinney, Navarro, and others, Joseph L. Hogg of Nacogdoches took the floor. Though he stated he was "opposed as any gentlemen to excluding from the right of suffrage the aborigines of this country, who had participated in the revolution, notwithstanding they may have abused that privilege," he wanted the word "white" maintained. [256]Hogg was adamant on ensuring that anyone "tainted with African blood" must "prove his pedigree."[257] Hogg's concerns were directed at no Tejano community more so than Adaeseños. Free Africans had married into the community since the eighteenth century, and several families – including

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[253] *Ibid*., 157.
[254] *Ibid., 156.*
[255] Ibid., 157.
[256] *Ibid*., 158.
[257] *Ibid*., 158.

the Córdovas and Ybarbos, the latter of whom were still present in Nacogdoches in not inconsiderable numbers – could trace their ancestry to these persons. Furthermore, this African ancestry was not invisible; Mier y Terán's had dismissed Adaeseños as "ignorant mulattoes and Indians" only two decades ago.[258] It is doubtful that Hogg was unaware the term "white," if applied so thoroughly, would disenfranchise his neighbors.

When the term "white" came to a vote, the delegates struck it from the state constitution. Of the Nacogdochians, Rusk voted "aye" to strike the word "white," Hogg voted "no." Ochiltree did not vote. The vote passed 42 to 14.[259] Of all Texas' Tejano communities, Adaeseños had the most at stake in this vote. Thanks in small part to Rusk, the Tejanos of Nacogdoches would enter the United States alongside their Anglo neighbors as fully enfranchised citizens.

4.4. Epilogue: Nacogdoches After 1846

Though the United States annexed Texas in 1845, the Texian Republic did not officially surrender its sovereignty until February of 1846. American soldiers once more crossed the Sabine into Texas that same year. This time they were not supposedly warding against Native American raids but preparing to defend newly acquired Texas from – and to provoke a war with – Mexico. Anglicization had finally become explicit Americanization. Nacogdoches' Tejanos, like other Mexican American communities, could never be considered fully white and therefore not fully American. They were too Indian, too Mexican. Their position was liminal – Adaeseños and Tejanos could be respected members of American society and legally regarded as whites, but

[258] Mier y Terán, *Texas by Terán,* 96.
[259] *Journals of the Convention, assembled at the city of Austin on the Fourth of July, 1845, for the purpose of framing a constitution for the State of Texas*, 97-98.

they could never be fully *white*. And Nacogdoches could never again belong to them as it now did to the Anglo American community.

The end of Republican Texan rule and the cessation of hostilities with Mexico in 1848 allowed race relations in Nacogdoches to slowly become more peaceful. In time, the Córdova Rebellion and the racial enmities of the early 1840s receded in the public consciousness and memory. By the mid 1850s, Antonio Menchaca had returned from exile to Nacogdoches; so, too, had Vicente Micheli, who fought alongside Córdova and even affixed his name to the rebel manifesto.[260] They were no longer pariahs, only reminders of a distant, tumultuous past. Besides, there were too few Tejanos, and too many Anglos, for Mexican malcontents to ever again pose a threat to the town's Anglo community. Other Adaeseños, however, were not so lucky as Menchaca. The 1850 U.S. census listed only 171 Adaeseños in Nacogdoches.[261] The Córdova family, along with other Nacogdochian Tejanos, had fled the town knowing they might never return. In 1874, Francisco Córdova donated what property the family still owned in Nacogdoches to the Catholic Church.[262] Francisco was living with others of his family in Louisiana at the time. (At the time County Clerk Robert Bruce Blake was compiling the municipal archives of Nacogdoches in the early 20th century, Vicente Córdova's grandson Lee had settled in Nacogdoches county.[263])

The most thorough description of post-annexation Nacogdoches comes from Frederick L. Olmsted, an Anglo American traveler who visited Texas in the mid 1850s. Before crossing the Sabine into Texas in 1853, Olmsted noticed that Western Louisiana contained a large Mexican

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[260] Nacogdoches Records Number V, Box 124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas, 25-29.
[261] Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836,* 141.
[262] Nacogdoches Records Number V, Box 124, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 25-29.
[263] Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection), LIII, 256.

population ("the population of the district is thought to be half Mexican"); undoubtedly, some of these were Adaeseños who had fled Nacogdoches.[264] When he came to Nacogdoches, Olmsted observed that "there are many Mexicans still living" in the town and its vicinity, but that they were a community unto themselves. "They preserve their exclusiveness, their priests, and their own customs," he wrote, "intermarrying, except accidentally, only among themselves, and are considered here as harmless vagabonds." At least one Tejano he met in East Texas, a young boy, could not speak English.[265]

Olmsted was from New England; he frowned upon Southern chattel slavery (particularly as practiced in Texas) and criticized the treatment of non-Anglos in the South, as well as the narrative Anglo Texans were constructing of their own history. He wrote concerning the Fredonians, who were already becoming folk heroes in Anglo East Texas, that, "[p]robably a more reckless and vicious crew was seldom gathered than that which peopled some parts of Eastern Texas at the time of its first resistance to the Mexican government."[266] He also critiqued the condescension with which Anglo Texans regarded Tejanos, though he was himself somewhat patronizing in the assessment. "The Mexican masses," he wrote, "are vaguely considered as degenerate and degraded Spaniards; it is, at least, equally correct to think of them as improved and Christianized Indians." [267]

Texas was still a dynamic and swiftly changing region during Olmsted's visit. It increasingly resembled the Southern slave states from which most of its Anglo inhabitants derived. Nacogdoches was itself being transformed in this process. In 1850, the county contained 1,404

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[264] Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey Through Texas: Or, a Saddle Trip on the Southeastern Frontier (*Austin: University of Texas Press, Austin, 1978), 63.
[265] *Ibid*., 78-79.
[266] *Ibid*., 124.
[267] *Ibid*., 454.

enslaved persons and produced 835 bales of cotton; five years later, those numbers had increased to 1,702 and 1,026, respectively.[268] Simultaneously, Texas was becoming less friendly toward Mexicans. Anglos in Matagorda County had expelled the ethnic Mexican inhabitants by legal fiat in the early 1850s.[269] Several other Texas communities had done so in the 1840s, including Gonzales. Undoubtedly, Nacogdoches' Tejanos worried about a similar fate befalling them.

Modern Nacogdoches bears little resemblance to that of the early-to-mid 19th century. Though it is now much larger – approximately 34,000 persons according to the 2010 U.S. census – it is no longer a hub of economic and social power in Texas.[270] Only 16.8 percent of its population identify as Hispanic or Latino, another 0.5 percent as Native American.[271] The county courthouse, built in 1911, was erected upon what was once the town's cemetery, where Gil Ybarbo and other town founders were interred. Gil Ybarbo's Stone House was relocated in to the campus of Nacogdoches' Stephen F. Austin University in 1936 after having been dismantled in 1907.[272] Nonetheless, the city is very conscious of its historical significance. It bears its title of "Oldest Town in Texas" proudly, and statues, historical markers, and carefully preserved buildings mark the paths trod by troops of tourists. Streets and schools bear names with local historical significance: El Camino Real, Durst, Fredonia, *etcetera*. The town is, even more so than it had become by 1846, an Anglo Texan stronghold.

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[268] *Ibid*., 477.
[269] *Ibid*., 502.
[270] United States Census Bureau. "QuickFacts: Nacogdoches city, Texas." Accessed March 7, 2016. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/4850256.
[271] *Ibid*.
[272] McDonald, "Old Stone Fort."

Chapter 5: Conclusion – History, Community, and Identity in Nacogdoches

"I was the Gateway. Here they came, and passed…"[273]

Traditionally, renditions of Nacogdoches' history have been Anglocentric. The historical narrative of Nacogdoches, established mostly by local historians in the early-to-mid 20th century, reflects the town's Anglo nature. If one were to read the writings of amateur historian Robert Bruce Blake, or the theses of James Gallaway Partin and Winnie Allen, one would think that Mexican Texans ceased to feature in the town's history after the conclusion of the post-Córdova Rebellion trials. Whereas these historians laud the town's early Hispanic settlers and heritage, Adaeseños only feature as antagonists or marginalized allies of Anglo-American Texans after 1821. Tejanos are effectively denied their rightful place and agency in the historical narrative of Nacogdoches, as they often are in the broader history of Texas. In fact, Adaeseño Nacogdoches is considered a separate entity and community entirely by these 20th century Anglo historians. A pamphlet celebrating Nacogdoches' history on the centennial of Texan independence from Mexico, written by Blake and another East Texas historian, George L. Crocket, opens with the following poem, "Nacogdoches Speaks," by Karle Wilson Baker:

> I was The Gateway. Here they came, and passed,
> The homespun centaurs with their arms of steel
> And taut heart-strings: wild wills, who thought to deal
> Bare-handed with jade Fortune, tracked at last
> Out of her silken lairs into the vast
> Of a Man's world. They passed, but still I feel
> The dint of hoof, the print of booted heel,
> Like prick of spurs – the shadows that they cast.
> I do not vaunt their valors, or their crimes:

[273] Karle Wislon Baker, "Nacogdoches Speaks;" quoted in Robert Bruce Blake and George L. Crocket, *Historic Nacogdoches* (Nacogdoches, Texas: The Nacogdoches Historical Society, 1939), 2.

> I tell my secrets only to some lover,
> Some taster of spilled wine and scattered musk.
> But I have not forgotten; and sometimes,
> The things that I remember rise, and hover.
> A sharper perfume in some April dusk. [274]

The poem's Nacogdoches – Blake's Nacogdoches, as perceived by the man who laid the foundation for its contemporary historical narrative – was the threshold for Anglo settlement in Texas. It was their entryway into the supposedly open, uncivilized wilderness of Texas. The same pamphlet calls Nacogdoches an Indian Town, a Spanish Town, and a White Settlement, but never a Mexican Town. When addressing the Córdova Rebellion, the pamphlet asserts that "the Mexican population" was on the "warpath."[275] This is the only reference to the town's Mexican population in the pamphlet. This language presents Adaeseños not only as a hostile and undivided entity, but uses terminology associated with prejudiced notions of (non-Hispanicized) Native Americans. Whereas Spanish Nacogdochians are laudable, their Mexican descendants are portrayed as enemies.

Ultimately, Anglos seized control of the economic, political, and social hierarchies of Nacogdoches, as well as its historical narrative, as they did elsewhere in Texas. Challenges to the Anglocentric historical tradition of Texas are a relatively recent development. However, revisionist attempts at Texas history have mostly bypassed Nacogdoches. Where they haven't, they often focus on singular events where Anglos tried, failed, or succeeded to wrest power from Texas' Mexican inhabitants. But framing the Tejano-Anglo relationship in Nacogdoches purely in terms of ethnic conflict unwittingly echoes the biases of the Anglocentric historical narratives that predated the Chicano movement of the 1970s. There was certainly conflict between the

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[274] Robert Bruce Blake and George L. Crocket, *Historic Nacogdoches*. (Nacogdoches: The Nacogdoches Historical Society, 1939), 3.
[275] *Ibid*., 13-14.

Anglo and Tejano ethnic communities, repeated struggles that dwarfed those elsewhere in Texas at the time in scale and violence. But there were also periods of cooperation and coexistence between the two that offered hope to individuals such as Juan Almonte, who longed to integrate Anglos into Tejano and Mexican society. Such hope collapsed during and after the Texas Revolution, and even more so after the Córdova Rebellion. But the legal battles over the fate of Adaeseños, both in East Texas in 1839 and in Austin in 1846, proved that Nacogdoches' Tejanos could retain a place – albeit a much smaller one than they were entitled to and hoped for – in Republican and American Texas.

The history of Nacogdoches' Tejano and Anglo communities between Mexican independence in 1821 and American annexation in 1845 and 1846 is, like all histories, a nuanced one. Though they clashed on several notable occasions, both ethnic communities generally cooperated when they perceived an opportunity to benefit themselves and the town they shared. These benefits were rarely distributed equitably. But both communities seem to have understood that they shared an identity as Nacogdochians. While their primary loyalties may have been to Texas, Mexico, the United States, or their ethnic identities as Anglo-Americans or Adaeseño-Tejanos, they all held some loyalty to Nacogdoches. This common identity drove them to ally against the threats posed by Haden E. Edwards and Colonel de las Piedras, to cooperate for the sake of mutual economic prosperity, and to pursue a multicultural and peaceful community in the late 1820s and early 1830s. The Texas Revolution, an inundation of Anglo immigrants disinclined to respect the rights of Tejanos, and the Córdova Rebellion shattered the possibility of truly multicultural and equitable Nacogdoches.

The rebellions and insurrections that took place in Nacogdoches between 1821 and 1846 – The Fredonia Rebellion, the ouster of Colonel de las Piedras and his garrison, the Texas

Revolution, and the Córdova Rebellion – are traditionally framed as conflicts between two ethnic communities, Tejanos and Anglos. There is an element of truth to this interpretation, but none of these events can or should be reduced to simply racial conflicts. While race and racial tensions featured prominently in all of these events, particularly the last two, they were not the sole or even the driving factors. Each of these conflicts pitted self-identified Nacogdochians, fighting to retain or establish the identity of their community, against perceived outsiders. In the Fredonia and Córdova Rebellions, these outsiders happened to be East Texans and Nacogdochians. In the fights against de las Piedras and Santa Anna, the outsiders were Centralist Mexican soldiers. Nonetheless, Anglos and Tejanos, as well as African Americans and Native Americans, found themselves fighting alongside each other in all four of these conflicts. Furthermore, the various rebels and counter-revolutionaries in these conflicts all claimed to represent the interests of a multicultural and diverse Nacogdoches.

Given the political and social dynamics of Texas at the time, a multicultural and equitable Nacogdoches was not viable in the long term. The Anglicization of Texas and Nacogdoches was largely unavoidable by the mid 1820s, perhaps even earlier, and Anglo immigrants were never inclined to share power with another ethnic community. While they claimed to represent all Texans regardless of their ethnicity and heritage, the rebels of the Texas Revolution and the Texian militias that combatted the Córdova Rebellion ultimately represented and interests of Anglo Texans, and allowed these interests to become institutionalized at the expense of Tejanos. The fate of Nacogdoches' historic Adaeseño community in the 1830s, 1840s, and afterward attests to this. It should not be forgotten, however, that cooperation, common goals, and even a mutual identity once united Nacogdoches's Tejano and Anglo communities.

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[276] This Collection includes the volumes of the Nacogdoches Archives (transcripts), Supplement Volumes, and several boxes of archival material. Materials located within the Transcripts and Supplements are cited according to volume and page number. Supplementary volume are specified as such, and use Arabic numerals, whereas the transcript volumes of the archives are listed by their Roman numeral designation; this is the manner in which they are catalogued and which these materials are cited by other scholars, including James Gallaway Partin, whose thesis is the earliest and most cited comprehensive history of Nacogdoches. e.g.: Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Research Collection at the Eugene C. Barker Center for Texas History at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas), Volume XXII, 39; e.g.(other appearances, save where abbreviated to *ibid*.): Nacogdoches Archives (Robert Bruce Blake Collection), XXV, 3-4. Materials archived within the boxes are cited according to the Chicago Manual of Style.

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Biography

Bryson Kisner was born in Austin, Texas on June 1, 1994. After graduating from Austin's Westlake High School in 2013, he enrolled in the University of Texas' College of Liberal Arts, where he majored in Plan II and History. In his time at UT, Bryson participated in the Shakespeare at Winedale Program (Summer 2014, Spring 2016, Summer 2017) as well as the Frank Denius Normandy Scholars Program (2015). He worked as an undergraduate teaching assistant to Dr. Robert Hutchings (Fall 2016) and as an intern at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History (Fall 2016 to Spring 2017). He also participated in extracurricular programs such as Shakespeare at Winedale's educational outreach programs, Spirit of Shakespeare, Plan II's Broccoli Project Theater Company, Plan I's Foot in the Door Theater Company, and Gamma Beta Phi. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa in May 2017 with Departmental honors in History, and plans to attend to graduate school for history in the near future.